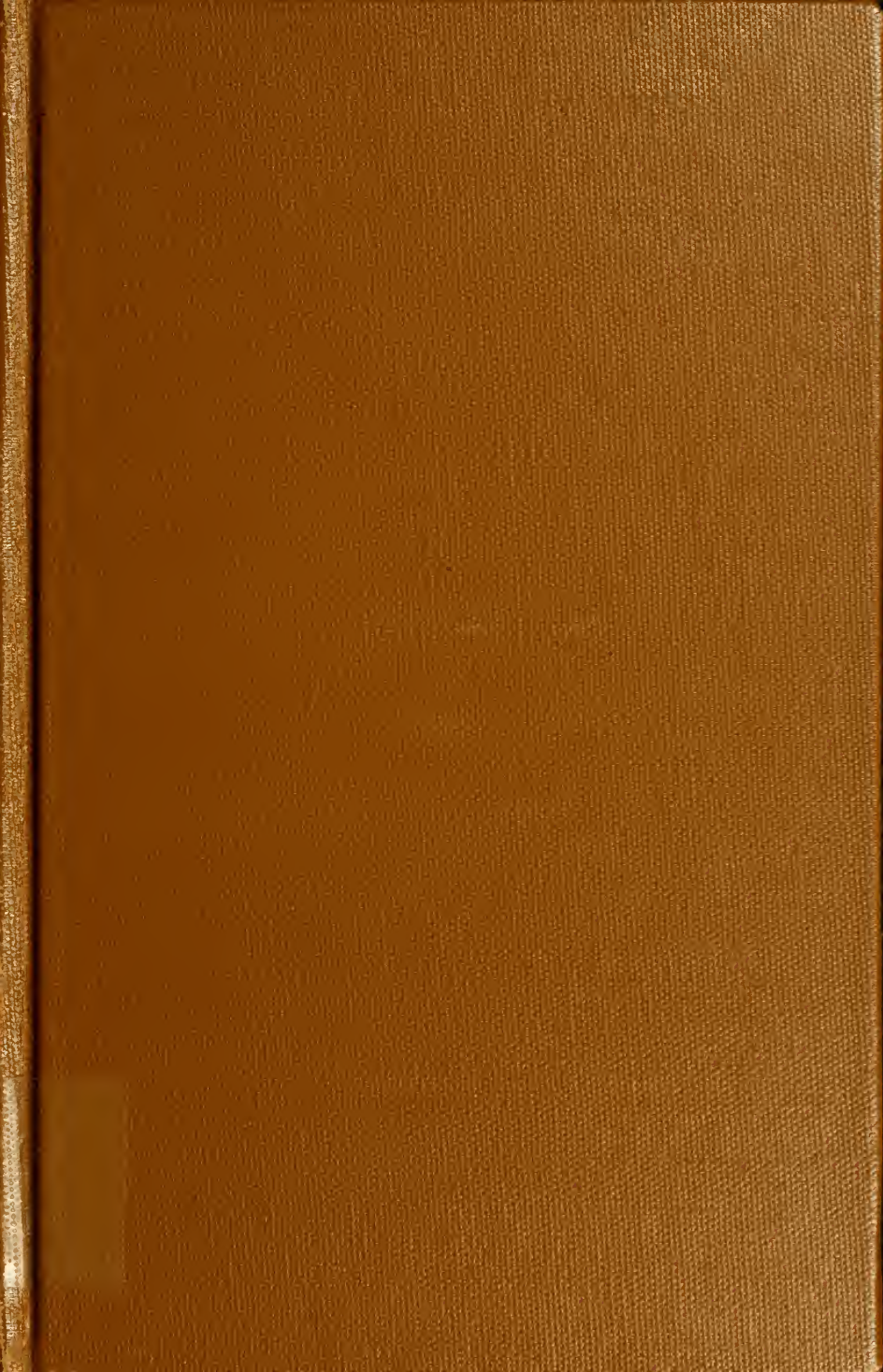




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VOL. VIII.

NEW-YORK:
THOMAS GEORGE, JR., SPRUCE STREET

1836.

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OR, THE VARIETIES OF FEMALE PIETY.
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THE MARTHAS;

OR,

THE VARIETIES OF FEMALE PIETY

BY ROBERT PHILIP,

OF MABERLY CHAPEL.

"Jesus loved Martha—and her sister."—*John*.

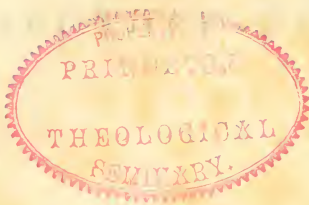
"Martha, Martha!"—*Luke*.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten."—*Jesus*.

NEW-YORK:

THOMAS GEORGE, JR. SPRUCE STREET.

1836.



P R E F A C E .

THE author did hope, that this volume would have embraced the Varieties of Female Character, as well as of Female Piety, because character and piety are so identical. He has, however, found it impossible to trace the developement of both, under the name of Martha. "THE LYDIAS, or the Developement of Female Character," will, therefore, follow this volume, and complete the first section of the Closet Library.

The author gratefully acknowledges, that he has not appealed in vain to the Mothers or the Daughters in British "Israel."

NEWINGTON GREEN, 1836.

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INTRODUCTION.

MARTHA AND THE MARTHAS.

THE key to the second volume of the Lady's Closet Library, must be taken from the fact, that pious females, who have not exactly the spirit of Mary, are usually ranked with Martha. Indeed, they regard themselves as Marthas, and are somewhat doubtful whether they have really "chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from" them. It is, therefore, because these who are not very like Mary, class themselves, and are classed, with Martha, that I bring under her name, "The Varieties of Female Piety." Many of its varieties are almost as unlike her, as she was unlike her sister: but all of them, so far as they are occasioned by faults or defects of character and temper, require the same treatment which Martha received from Christ;—tenderness enough to prevent despair, and reproof enough to check presumption.

Martha's faults are not the only faults, which the Saviour rebukes and chastises, in all whom He loves. His object is, to have all his real disciples conformed to His own image; and, therefore he contends against whatever, in each of them, is most unlike himself. Whatever had been the besetting sin of Martha's character or spirit, his rebuke,—"*Martha, Martha!*" would have been equally pointed and unequivocal. It applies, therefore, to all those varieties of piety which, like hers, leave some doubt upon all minds (the possessors not excepted) of its present reality, or of its future issue. The rebuke bears directly, not indeed upon all imperfection, but upon all imprudence and oversight, negligence and self-will. Accordingly, it is applied to themselves, by many pious females, who never went Martha's lengths in ill-temper. There are meek and amiable women, who feel instinctively that they have more of Martha, than of Mary, in their character. Some of them, although not "cumbered about much *serv-ing*," are yet so cumbered about something, that their hearts are almost divided between God and the world. Others, again, although not "careful and troubled about *many* things," are yet so absorbed with some earthly good or evil in their lot, that it is very doubtful to themselves, whether

heavenly things have any real place in their affections. Others, again, have so much to contend with, either from temperament or condition, from trials or temptations, that they are almost the creatures of circumstances, and vary in their feelings with all the variations of their health or prosperity. They are

"Every thing by turns,
And nothing long."

It would be easy (and as *useless* as easy) to depict these faults and defects. It would be still easier, and more useless, to condemn them. They can only be reprov'd with effect, by what can *cure* them effectually. Nothing but the remedy provided for them in the gospel, can bring home their sin or folly to the heart. It is only when we see, from the designs of grace, and from the character of glory, what we *ought* to be, and what we *may* be, that we acknowledge, even to ourselves, what we really are. It is when confronted with the image of Christ and the image of the Heavenly, that we become alarmed at the "earthly" features of our own image. No light, but the light of eternity, can expose our faults fully, and yet set us to correct them willingly, at the same time. We may yield partly to *human* influence; but nothing less than Divine authority, and that only in its *paternal* spirit and eternal sanctions, can sway our inclinations.

Convinced of all this by my own experience, and from the contact or correspondence into which my "*GUIDES*" have brought me with so many of the varieties of male and female piety, at home and abroad, I have not confronted the peculiarities of men and women "professing godliness;" nor contrasted the Marthas with the Marys; nor even compared the sexes: but have brought all the varieties of piety, to the *one* standard by which they will all be tried at last,—the *image* of Christ! And where there is not conscience enough to take lessons *there*—I certainly do not include such characters amongst the varieties of Christians. They vary too little from the world, to have any identity with the Church. In a word, I have nothing to say, in this volume, to any female

who is quite satisfied with her own piety, either as to its kind or degree. It is intended to encourage those who "stand in doubt" of themselves, and to "stir up, by way of remembrance," the "pure minds" of those who are doubted by others.

Such being my design, I have said little about Martha. I entertain no doubt of her piety. She presents, in her honest, although bustling, regard to the Saviour, a noble contrast to her nation, and to the mass of her sex. She was even more prompt than Mary, to meet Christ, when he came to Bethany on the death of Lazarus; and she was the first to whisper cautiously to her, (whom she had once, perhaps often, scolded,) "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." He had called for Mary; but he had not sent Martha with his message. She, however, would not trust the tenderness or the prudence of any one, to break the good news to her weeping sister; but, the moment she saw that they were *good* news, away she ran, to prepare Mary for them, and to bring her to Jesus without fear or surprise. Thus

Martha was as much delighted, on this occasion, to take her sister to the feet of Jesus, to hear his "gracious words," as she was once offended with her for sitting at his feet.

All this is highly creditable to her; and it explains, in some degree, why "Jesus loved Martha," as well as Mary. Still, I dare not take her piety out of the *cloud*, which the Saviour's rebuke,— "Martha, Martha!"—left upon it. That rebuke was as much intended for warning, as His continued love was for encouragement. It would, therefore, be as *unwise* to make the star of His love disperse the cloud of His reproof entirely, as it would be *unfair* to make the cloud eclipse the star, at all. They are equally over Martha's head, in her history; and, therefore, I dare not separate nor soften them: but must leave the star in all its brightness, and the cloud in all its darkness, to make their own impression upon every female, who is conscious of any thing which deserves the "Martha, Martha!" of the Saviour she loves and desires to be loved by.

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THE MARTHAS.

No. I.

VARIETIES, FROM TIMIDITY.

You are familiar with the question—"Who hath despised the day of small things?" It has been transferred, not unfairly nor unaptly, from the foundation-stone of the second temple in Jerusalem, to the first symptoms and marks of that "good work" of grace in the heart, by which we become living Temples, or "an habitation of God through the Spirit." Now, whoever else may despise these incipient signs of conversion, God does not. Even when there is nothing but a penitent spirit, and whilst both joy and peace are unknown, we are warranted to say with David, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." This is pleasing! But the Spirit of inspiration led Isaiah beyond David, in thus condescending to the "low estate" of commencing piety. Isaiah was warranted to class the *trembling* amongst the "contrite ones," even when God, as the High and Lofty one, who inhabiteth Eternity, was describing the hearts to which He would look with compassion, and in which He would dwell with complacency. Isaiah lvii. 15. Neither the temple on earth, nor even the temple of heaven,—although the former resounded with Hosannas, and the latter with Hallelujahs, could so engross the attention of Jehovah, as to divert it from true penitents, even whilst their prayers were only as the sighing of prisoners, or but groanings which cannot be uttered. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest? But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." This is condescension! Who would despise the day of small things, after thus seeing how God delights to honor it? In the presence of this fact, you can see, at a glance, why there is joy amongst the angels of God in heaven, over one sinner that repenteth. God himself rejoiceth over them "with singing." It is not in this connection, that even a stern theorist, who calls nothing faith, but assurance; and nothing conversion, but the witness of the Spirit, would dare to say,—*"the devils believe, and tremble."* They do tremble at the word of God; but not in a broken or contrite spirit. It is not a sense of their own guilt or vileness, which awes them. They do not despair because they feel unworthy of hope. There is no humility in their horror, and no contrition in their terror: whereas, when you tremble most at the word of God, it is because you feel yourself worthy of its threatenings, and unworthy of its great and precious promises. And it would not be even a "day of small things" in your experience, if you had

never trembled at the word of God! There is no "good thing in the heart toward the Lord," until there is some serious fear of his anger, and a real sense of being utterly unworthy of his mercy.

It is, indeed, a great thing, to get rid of the "fear which hath torment." Nothing is more desirable than that it should be "cast out." It is never cast out, however, by casting away a sense of unworthiness, nor by trying to think lightly of the Divine anger. It is "perfect love" that casteth out tormenting fear, 1 John iv. 14; and love never can be perfected or improved, if you despise the day of small things. Your love to the Saviour is not insincere, because you have many fears. It would, indeed, be very questionable, and equivocal too, if you had no fears. "No strange thing hath befallen you," if, as yet, you have more fears than hopes.

This is, however, a critical state to be in. It is not uncommon, certainly; but still, it is dangerous. Some have "done despite to the Spirit of grace," by despising the day of small things, as too small to be worth much immediate notice; and others, by despairing, because it was so unlikely to lead on to a day of *great* things. Against both these extremes, I would put you upon your guard. They are equally perilous, and have proved *fatal* to many. Perhaps, you know some one in your own circle,—a sister, or brother, or friend, who is in danger of quenching the Spirit, because not aware of the varieties of manner and degree, in which the Spirit begins the good work of grace. You may have been at a loss, how to answer the objections of some one, whose occasional feelings seem to you, "tokens for good," whilst to him, or her, they appear too slight and evanescent to deserve attention. Would it not be both wise and kind, to bring the following appeal under the notice of such a one? It is so solemn and pointed; but not too much so, when there is a disposition to despise the day of small things.—Now, no "good thing" toward God, and the Lamb, in the heart, can be so small, as to be *unworthy* of your watchful and prayerful notice. Passing thoughts and momentary impressions, may be unworthy of being called "a saving work of grace upon your soul." Conviction is not conversion, nor is feeling faith. It might, therefore, be very wrong to conclude that you have "passed from death to life," or been "translated from darkness unto light," merely because you have some sense of your need of this divine change, and some hope or wish to experience it. You do, however, know something of its nature, and feel occasionally its necessity. You may regret, but you do not "*marvel*," that you must be born again of the Spirit, before you can enter the kingdom of heaven. You know too much both of heaven and of your own heart, to be surprised (however you

may be offended) when you are told that you are unfit for heaven. And is this conviction nothing? It may be—it is—a day of small things, compared with the great searchings of heart, and with the strong cries and tears, which the necessity of being born again is producing in some of your family or friends. There may be no comparison between the strength of your convictions, and the cry of the Pentecostal converts. Any fear or hope you feel, may be but as the mere shadow of their impressions. What then? So much the more need you have to take care that you do not despise the approaches of the Holy Spirit to your own heart.

Do not say in answer to this appeal, "I am not at all sure that the Spirit is striving with me, or doing any thing for me." It is easy to utter these words, when an excuse is wanted on the spur of the moment, for delay or indecision in religion: but you durst not utter them deliberately, after looking fairly at their meaning. Your tongue would cleave to the roof of your mouth, were you to try to say,—“I am one, whom the Spirit of God never once influenced to think or pray. He has been moving upon the face of the waters of the Sanctuary where I worship, converting sinners, and consoling penitents, and sanctifying believers; but he never suggested one good thought in my mind, nor awakened one holy desire, nor shed one ray of light upon my path of duty or interest. However He moved in power or glory, and wherever He wrought, He passed me by—let me alone!”

This would be “*lying* against the Holy Ghost!” Had even your occasional impressions been fewer, and your past resolutions feeblar than you know them to have been, you would not dare to speak thus, lest you should provoke the Spirit of God to let you alone for ever. Why, it is one great reason for any hope you have of ever being called by grace, that you have felt, and do feel, that the Spirit has not let you alone. It is because you are not given up to a seared conscience, nor to a reprobate mind, that you venture to calculate upon some future “day of power,” coming in time enough to prepare you for eternity. Accordingly, were you quite sure that such a day of power would not come, unless, from this moment, you set yourself to act upon your present convictions, you would be very glad to admit that what you have already felt, was, although not the first fruit of the Spirit, the breaking up of “the fallow ground” of the heart, for the good seed of the Word. Well; the Holy Ghost does say, “*To-day*, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your heart.”

Do not evade this warning by saying, “that you would follow the leadings of the Spirit, if He would only lead you, as powerfully and sensibly, as he does some whom you know.” You have no more right to dictate to the Holy Spirit the manner in which he shall deal with you, than to dictate to Providence the way in which it shall treat you. Now, you would not presume to lay it down as an indispensable condition of your giving yourself to the Lord and to the Church, that he should give you whatever *temporal* blessings you may think best for you. You know that you cannot stipulate with God, to have all your own will, in “the things which pertain to life.”

Why, then, in the things which “pertain to godliness?”

Ponder Paul’s solemn question: “Who hath known the mind of the Lord, (the Spirit,) that he may *instruct* Him?” 1 Cor. ii. 16. Can you, in the face of this caution, say that you will not honor nor own the Holy Ghost, unless He act with you, just as He has done with others? Surely not! It may not, indeed, be altogether wrong to wish for such an awakening as the jailor’s; or for such a flower-like opening of the heart as Lydia’s; or for such a rejoicing discovery of the glory of Christ as the eunuch’s; or even for such a constraining impulse from the love of Christ, as that which carried the Corinthians before it, like vessels with a fair wind, upon a mighty spring-tide: but it is wrong, to insist upon one or other of these modes of conversion, as the condition of your turning to the Lord. You may, like Ephraim, pray, “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned:” and like David, “Draw me, and I will run after Thee;” but you must not prescribe to God either the precise weapon of power by which He shall turn you, or the precise cord of love by which he shall draw you. Leave the selection of means and modes of Divine operation in the hands of Divine wisdom; and, in the mean time cherish the sacred impressions which have already been made upon your heart and conscience. They are more valuable to you, and involve your eternal welfare more deeply, than the mantle of Prophecy, or the gift of Miracles, were even both to descend upon you. Prophets have perished, and workers of mighty miracles have become apostates; but no one ever drew back to perdition, who honestly and humbly sought for the renewing of the Holy Ghost. O, then, quench not, grieve not, vex not, limit not, the Spirit of God!

This appeal may not be altogether useless to yourself: for although, in general, you do not despise the day of small things, there may be some of “the things of the Spirit,” which you too lightly esteem. His “*shadows*, as well as His lights,” (as Sheshbazzar would have said,) are instructive. He can lead by the Pillar, as a *cloud*; as well as by the Pillar, as a flame of *fire*. I mean, that the Spirit is often present, and working mightily too, when we imagine that he is withdrawn entirely. This is no paradox. We are so much in the habit of confounding the work and witness of the Spirit, with *comfort*, that we are for ever ready, when we are uncomfortable, to think Him “afar off.” But this is quite a mistake! He is not standing afar off, much less forgetting us, when we are left to feel that our strength is weakness: and our ability to hope, dependent; and our inclination to persevere, precarious. He is, indeed, working *deep* in our hearts, when we are afraid to look at them. Humility, and self-abasement, and self-distrust, are as much fruits of the Spirit, as love, joy, or peace. And, accordingly, by both His *lights* and *shadows*, we are sent to the Cross and the Mercy-seat; to the Bible and the Sanctuary, praying with equal fervency, “Lord, save, or I perish.”

This is not, however, all that I mean. I am

quite persuaded that some of the most direct influences of the Holy Spirit, or those which come from the throne, as JEREMY TAYLOR says ejaculatory prayer goes to it, "in a *straight line*," are least attended to by us. For, have you not often felt upon your spirit the impulse, as it were, of an invisible hand, gently pushing you off your chair, that you might go into your closet; or rise to take up your Bible, as more wanted than the book you were reading? Have you not occasionally felt, as if you were haunted by the presence of a dying neighbor, or by the urgency of his watching angels, to go out and speak a word in season, or, at least, to show that you had Christian sympathy? Have not many things occurred to you as hints, wanted at home; and as plans, likely to do good at home, which, if you had communicated or acted upon whilst they were fresh in your mind, might have been very useful to others, and saved you from the self-upbraiding which follows the neglect of relative duty?

In thus recalling such angel-visits of Divine influence, by which new duties are suggested, or improvements in old duties enforced, nothing is farther from my design than to make any duty dependent upon impulse. The Spirit will not supersede the law of duty, by the grace of help. He does, however, help us in obeying that law, by throwing new and impressive lights upon its bearings, and upon the best way of following them out. Whilst, therefore, I would solemnly warn you against following any impulse, however plausible, which is not founded upon express rule, I would most affectionately urge you not to quench or resist the Holy Ghost, when he makes the letter or the spirit of any scriptural duty "arise in your hearts like a day-star," and shine as a light in a dark place. Unto such illuminations, you "do well to take heed." It will never be a day of great things in your devotional experience, if you let such direct rays from heaven pass unnoticed. Do not wonder that the COMFORTER will not always come into your closet, nor meet you regularly at the sacrament, when you wish him to do so—if you often refuse to go alone *with* him, or out *for* him, when he is whispering to you what he would have you to do. This "still small voice" is one of the small things which you must not despise. "If you do," (Sheshbazzar would have said,) "God may *reverse* the Horeb vision of Elijah, and make the stormy wind, the earthquake and the fire, follow the still small voice."

These, however, are but passing hints. I want, in order to encourage you to prize and cherish the beginnings of the good work of grace in your own soul, to mark most attentively, how the Saviour estimated and treated even "the blade" of true piety, before "the full corn," or "the ear" had shot forth. He did not despise the day of small things! He often treated as "great things," prayers and faith which others would have despised, and which the offerers themselves were afraid or ashamed of, as too weak and imperfect to be accepted.

Both the proofs and promises of this delightful fact are, of course, rising in your memory like stars, in light and loveliness. You could repeat them, without my quoting them at all. So far well. But let us just look over some of them for

once, as illustrations of the Oracle on which this essay is founded, that we may see and feel how transportingly true it is.

I know not which of them is your favorite.—Mine is, that sweet assurance to young and weak disciples, "He shall feed his flock as a Shepherd; He shall gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom." You cannot be weaker than a lamb is, when it requires such care from the shepherd. And remember; it is the weakness, and not the *innocence* of the lamb, which engages thus the shepherd's sympathies.

The allusion is from the East. Often, on going out amongst the folds in the morning, after having kept watch all night, against the wolves, the shepherd finds a young lamb, chilled with the dew or the frost of the night, and unable to follow the flock to green pastures or still waters. He raises it gently from the ground, and wraps it to his bosom under his own warm cloak, and carries it forward, thus, until it revive. Now "the Great Shepherd," is just such a "good shepherd!" All the sheep, and even some under-shepherds, may not have tenderness nor patience, to watch over such a lamb as you, nor to wait until you are able to follow them on hill and through valley: but the Shepherd of souls, is the Bishop of souls; and he will neither leave nor forsake you. He can be "touched with a feeling of your infirmities," and thus can bear with them, until you can bear to move and rest with all his flock. He will even gather you in his arms, until you can walk in his footsteps; and carry you in his bosom, until you can follow him whithersoever he goeth. Thus, He does not despise the day of small things: but according to their smallness, makes his care and tenderness great. And, will you despair of weakness, which He pities? Will you give up hope, whilst He gives this heed, and hand, and heart, to the weak in faith, and to the fainting in hope?

Take another view of your case. "A bruised reed shall he not break." No; the music it makes at first, may be neither harmony nor melody; may be rather sad than sweet; but He will not break it, nor cast it away, because of its broken notes. He will mend and moisten it, until its tones are clear and melodious. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings," He perfects praise. Many a bruised reed, which was once almost as dumb or dull as the harps upon the willows of Babylon, is now sounding out the New Song, with not a little of both the spirit and compass of the golden harps before the throne of God. And, however bruised, you are not a broken reed. A broken reed is cast away from all the means of mending. But you are not only in the land of the living, and thus in the place of hope; but you are also under the care of a minister, or under the guidance of a friend, or have access to some book, whose chief object is to tune and strengthen bruised reeds, until they can

———"Join their cheerful songs,
With angels round the throne."

Remember; Jesus says, (and you can surely take his word!) "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." The night of penitential weeping, will be followed by the morning

of believing joy. You can review in this way, at your leisure, the other proofs of the Saviour's considerate and compassionate regard to the day of small things. In the meantime, whilst these two are before you, and you are admiring them, I must remind you, that none of them are intended to reconcile you to the *continuance* of a day of small things, in either your faith or holiness. It is, that small things may become great things, that they are thus watched by Heaven, and thus commended to the watchfulness and tenderness of the church on earth. "The blade" of piety has the promise of "the early rain," just that the ear and the full corn in the ear may come on to meet "the latter rain."

But whilst the first appearances of heartfelt piety are thus not overlooked by the Saviour, neither are they overrated by him. The reed, though bruised, is called a reed; but it is not *complimented* as sweet enough in its sound. So also, the smoking flax is not threatened with quenching; but neither is its *smoke* commended. In connection with both emblems it is added, "He shall bring forth judgment unto truth." In prophetic language, this amounts to the same thing as the apostolic promise, "He who began the good work, will carry it on." Thus, we are as much bound to grow in grace, as we are encouraged to trust in grace, by both the condescension of the Father, and the tenderness of the Son, towards our day of small things.

In a word, it must not be always a day of small things with us; for we may soon have great trials, or great temptations; and small faith or patience will not sustain them well. "What will you do in the day of visitation?" is, therefore, a question which ought not to be lost sight of entirely, even at this stage of your experience. Do not, indeed, forbode evil; but do not forget that it will come, sooner or later, in some form. It may come very soon, and severely too, if you sit down contented with this day of small things. Let the following allegory of RACHEL'S LEPROSY, teach you wisdom. And be not discouraged, because you cannot see how there can come a day of *great things* in your experience. You may acquire great peace, great comfort, and great influence. In every thing good, you may be much greater than you are; and although you will never call nor think your holiness great, even when others feel it to be great both in its beauty and strength, resolve that it shall not be *less* in either than care can make it.

ALLEGORY, No. 1.

RACHEL'S LEPROSY.

THE IOM HACCHIPURIM, or the great day of atonement, drew nigh again; and Sheshbazzar, although "old and gray-headed," prepared to appear before God in Zion. For the Beershebean eagle (as Rachel called him) seemed to "renew his youth," annually, from the very moment the expiation trumpets summoned the tribes to Jerusalem. Their sound fell on his ear, like a voice from the excellent glory; and their signal for pilgrimage

was welcomed by him, as Elijah welcomed the cherubic chariot of his translation. He was no longer able to go up to Jerusalem, "three times a year;" and, therefore, he preferred to be there on the DAY OF DAYS, that he might learn, as he said, from the High Priest, to enter within the veil of eternity, bearing only the blood and incense of propitiation, as all his introduction and plea. Thus his *spirit* passed into the Holy of Holies even before the High Priest; and often lingered at the mercy-seat, or bathed in the Shekinah of glory, long after He had come out to bless the people. That benediction, Sheshbazzar welcomed as his own warrant to kneel in *spirit*, where the priest had ministered; and thus to realize his own entrance into heaven.

This was his meaning when he called his pilgrimage, his translation; and his staff and scrip, his chariot and horses of fire; for Beersheba, compared with Jerusalem, was to him, on that solemn feast day, as the earth compared with heaven. And yet Beersheba was dear to the good old man: for Abraham's well was still there; and, although the trees of Abraham's grove had passed away, like the Angels who once rested under their shadow, "the place thereof" was not unknown. Oaks of Mamre, and palm trees of Lahairoi, had replaced them. Sheshbazzar often drank at that well, and mused in that spot, in the very spirit of its Patriarchal owner, and of its Angelic visitors. Still it was not Zion! It was the sepulchre of his fathers and of his children, but it was not the sanctuary of his God. His FIG TREE was there; but his TREE OF LIFE was upon Mount Zion.

The prospect of his translation did not, however, so absorb his spirit, as to divert his sympathies from those who had to stay at home. Having, like Elijah, thrown his mantle over Esrom and Rachel, he continued to commune with them, until the moment of his departure; and to pray that a double portion of his spirit might rest upon them. And never did they stand in more need of counsel or prayer. They had been betrothed in the month *Nisan*; but when the Tisri trumpets were blown, Esrom showed no inclination to go up to Jerusalem. He was not "glad" when Sheshbazzar said unto him, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord." He had tried to persuade himself, that it was not his *duty this year*! Rachel was drooping in both health and spirits: and surely it could not be duty to leave her alone! She herself tried to think that, for *once*, Esrom might be excused; for she felt, at times, as low as if the Angel of Death was not far off. Even Sheshbazzar was uneasy on her account. He feared something *worse* than death: for Rachel's mind was one, which might be thrown off its *balance* by an excess of either grief or joy. Its very *strength* was more perilous than weakness; because she put it *all* forth upon whatever interested her feelings deeply. She threw her whole soul, equally, into human and Divine things, by turns. On the day of her *betrothment*, she thought of nothing else; and on the day after, which was the Sabbath, she was so absorbed by Sheshbazzar's exposition of the Law and the Prophets, in the synagogue, that she forgot it entirely.

Even next morning, she met Esrom without

alluding to their plighted vows. She was still in ecstasy with a Sabbath which, she said, had been to her a fragment of the first Sabbath of Time, and a foretaste of the first Sabbath of Eternity. Esrom felt piqued, and asked, sarcastically, "Did Adam *pray* like the Elders, or will Angels *sing* like the choirs of Beersheba?" This association of ideas was ludicrous. It threw her off her guard: and, for the first time, Rachel criticised the tones and terms of public worship. Until that moment, she had thought of nothing, but their spirit and design: but, from that moment, she began to weigh them, not only in the balance of the sanctuary, but also in the scales of taste. They were "found wanting" in both; and she wondered that she had overlooked their defects so long. It was an unhappy discovery! She resolved to *improve* the form of her own devotions: for, hitherto, she had adopted whatever petition came *warm* from the lips of the Elders; and had thought only of what she wanted. Now, she began to think more about her words than her wants; and tried oftener to adore like a seraph, than to pray like a penitent. Sublimity became her study. Humility was left to accident. She could trust her heart, (she said to herself,) that it would never relapse into hardness or coldness. It had been melted and warmed by the holy fire of heaven; and she took for granted, that the glow would never decay. Surely the principle of grace might be as safely trusted to its own vitality, upon the altar of the soul, as the sacred fire upon the altar of the temple! She, at least, was sure that, after what she had seen and felt herself to be as a sinner, nothing could inflate or deaden her spirit as a penitent.

She thus trusted her own heart; and it betrayed her! It soon took more interest in her *nuptial* preparations, than in her closet, or in her copy of the Law. She was no longer humble before God. She never forgot "the Grapes of Gomorrah;" but she no longer *wept* when she remembered them. Her old ambition to dazzle or puzzle others in company, returned on her. She was upon the watch for opportunities to shine in conversation, whenever Sheshbazzar was not present. She almost *claimed* credit for her piety from the Elders; for having lost much of the witness of her own spirit, she sought relief in the good opinion of others. But she oftener startled the Elders, than conciliated them, by her professions. Some doubted her sincerity, and others her orthodoxy; and she felt equally mortified by both. There was bitterness as well as truth; sarcasm as well as sorrow, in her lips, when she said of them, "that Angels were better judges of repentance." Sheshbazzar had thrown out the same hint to the Elders, but in another spirit. He smiled complacently, whilst he said to them, "You will soon be as glad as GABRIEL was, when he put Rachel's tears into the urn of heaven; he had seen none purer, since Hannah wept before the Lord in Shiloh." The Elders had said to him, "Her tears may be in your book, but they are not in his bottle yet." It was a harsh speech; and yet, they meant no harm. Rachel had long been a *mystery* to them; for although she never spoke "as one of the foolish women," neither did she speak like the generality of the wise women.

She was often more mystical than the woman of Tekoah, and more poetical than Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth. When she called the stars, shekinahs in miniature, the old men thought her profane; when she said, the sun was an emblem and a pledge, that the glory between the Cherubim would, one day, fill the whole earth, they deemed her insane, or too partial to the Gentiles; and when she doubted *their* interpretation, of both the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and the hatred of Esau, by God, they almost charged her with blasphemy. Thus it was not wonderful, that they were but slow of heart to believe her to be a daughter of the Covenant. Her speech, they said truly, "was hardly the language of Canaan;" for it was never much according to the *shibboleth* of the wise, nor the *sibboleth* of the weak; and now it was less so than ever. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh;" and Rachel's heart abounded now with tastes, emotions, and aspirations, which *sober* truth could not satisfy, nor ordinary teachers please. When Sheshbazzar was not in the synagogue, she often stayed at home on the Sabbath. She could get "no good," she said, "from the common-place of the *dry* Elders, nor from the whining of the *weeping* Elders, nor from the thundering of the *fiery* Elders. Merab was too controversial; Jeduthun, too legal; Jubal, too declamatory; and Hamath, too hasty. Except, therefore, when Sheshbazzar spoke, Rachel hardly listened. She preferred her own "worldless thoughts," she said, "to their unthoughtful and low words."

Esrom ministered to this fastidious taste. She herself had never thought of bringing the *prayers* of the Elders to its bar, until he obtruded them upon her notice. Her own spirit had long been too devotional, to weigh the words or notice the tones of those who led the synagogue of the people to the THRONE of Jehovah. Even when the Elders who had wounded her, lifted up their hands in prayer, her heart, whilst simple, forgot all their faults and defects, and felt only that God was listening!

Sheshbazzar had often said to her, "Remember; God only is addressed in prayer. You are no longer a *hearer*, when His worship begins. You are then speaking unto the Lord; and what you have to say to Him, is too solemn to depend upon words or tones. Let your *heart* pray for mercy and grace: and it will ascend to heaven like Manoah's angel in the flame of the sacrifice, even if the altar be an *unhewn* rock."

In the sun of such sentiments Rachel's devotional spirit had ripened; and, until Esrom blighted it, by criticising the prayers of the Elders, nothing that they were as men, or had said as judges had even tarnished the *bloom* of her devotional simplicity. Or as Sheshbazzar had often expressed it,—place her only before the Throne, and her heart is a harp which will yield melody unto the Lord, at the touch of any "holy hands," whether laic or levitical.

Such it had been, whilst Sheshbazzar was the depositary of all its secrets. Such he himself often found it, when he led the devotions of the synagogue. But ever since her betrothment, it had often been *untuned*. Her plans—her prospects—her arrangements, for the day when she

should be brought to the house of Esrom, "in raiment of needlework: the virgins, her companions, following with gladness and rejoicing," had more than divided her heart, even in the closet; and, in the synagogue, they often diverted it from both the word and worship of Jehovah. Sheshbazzar did not suspect this. He saw, indeed, that Rachel's preparations were upon a scale worthy of her tribe and her parentage; and that her own taste would preside over every thing—from her own robes, to the veils of her maidens, and even down to the lamps and torches of the procession. But why not? Who had such exquisite taste?—"Rachel is, indeed, troubled about many things," said the old man; "but her good sense is a pledge that nothing will be extravagant or vain. She is sure to adorn herself and others, only according to the manner of holy women of old. There may be 'nets of checker-work and wreaths of chain-work' here and there in her arrangements, as around the pillars of the temple; but the crown of the whole, like the capitals of Jachin and Boaz, and the borders of the molten Sea, will be '*lily work*;' the still grandeur of gracefulness, the calm majesty of meekness; as from the chisel of Hiram of Tyre."

Sheshbazzar did not know that Rachel had plunged into the bustle of preparation, in order to forget her penitential vows, and to hide from herself the backslidings of her own heart. And, had her heart still been what he supposed, he would have been more than justified in taking for granted, that she would plan and execute all things as in the sight of God. For, until Esrom's critical levity betrayed her devotional spirit, she could turn any series of domestic duties into a Bethel Ladder between earth and heaven. But, when she became a critic in the house of prayer, she soon lost her simplicity in the closet. At first, she was shocked on discovering, that unhallowed associations of the ludicrous or frivolous, were blending themselves with phrases which once breathed her holiest feelings. Then, she could not use, in the closet, expressions she had blamed, or smiled at, in the synagogue. Then, she sat musing in silence about prayer, instead of kneeling before the Lord with supplication. At length, she became equally ashamed and afraid to be alone with God!

Thus Rachel's heart condemned her, and to escape from its censures, she filled her hands, to overflowing, with the duties of her betrothment; leaving neither time nor thought for any thing beyond the ceremonials of religion. She fasted without humility, and worshipped without love, except when Sheshbazzar presided. And even then, he was often to her, only "as one that playeth well upon an instrument."

All this process and result of spiritual defection she concealed from him. She tried to persuade herself that, like the cloud which had occasionally come over her spirit, before she knew the Lord; and which, when it passed off, left her more cheerful than it had found her; so this hiding of the Divine presence would only be temporary, and enhance the brightness of the Candle of the Lord, when it should shine upon her *own* tabernacle: for she had vowed, that the house of Esrom and Rachel should be in all things "the tabernacle of the

righteous," whenever she entered upon its management. In *its* closet, she was sure to renew her communion with God!—at *its* family altar, sure to pray in the spirit? by *its* hearth in the evening, and under its fig-tree in the morning, sure to shake off from Esrom and herself, all the mildew of backsliding! Nothing of this, however, was attempted in the mean time. All improvement, and penitence too, was postponed until Sheshbazzar should "sanctify the household" of the betrothed, upon his return from Jerusalem. But, before he returned, Rachel was become "A LEPER, white as snow!"

No symptoms of this awful malady had shown itself, when Sheshbazzar left Beersheba. He had marked the throb of her veins, and felt her hand burn, and seen the hectic flush and the pallid hue succeed each other on her cheek, without increasing or diminishing the strange glaze of her eyes: but he dreamt not of leprosy. There was no "bright spot in the skin," and no "whiteness in the hair;" and thus, although he parted from her with a heavy heart, it was *mental*, not bodily, disease he foreboded; and that fear, he was too wise to utter or betray. He blessed Rachel, in the name of the Lord, and placed himself as usual at the head of his brethren, to conduct them to Zion.

Sheshbazzar exemplified at Jerusalem, the spirit of his favorite maxim: he shook the mulberry-trees of every typical ordinance, and prophetic promise. He was the first, daily, at the morning sacrifice, and the last to retire from the evening sacrifice: the first at the altar of burnt-offering, and the last at the altar of incense. When the Levites walked in procession around the altars, waving the palms of Judah, and sounding the silver trumpets of the GREAT HOSANNA, no vocal hosanna, amongst the thousands of Israel, swelled above Sheshbazzar's. Like the eagle mounting upon the summits of Gerrizzim, the old man seemed to renew his youth, whilst thus waiting upon the God of his fathers in Zion. When his fellow-pilgrims could distinguish him in the great congregation, or at the waters of Siloa, they saw, from his looks, that he was shaking the mulberry-trees, and like the fleece of Gideon, was saturated with the dew of heaven.

When the *Iom Hacchipurim* ended, they prepared to return to Beersheba; and Sheshbazzar was, as usual, their guiding pillar in the wilderness. "We have been, my children, like the spies," he said, "searching the land of promise; what have we to show at home as the *fruit* of it? Grapes, or wild gourds? Not the latter, I am quite sure! But, have we cut such a cluster of the grapes of Eschol, as to require 'two men to carry it between them on a staff?' Or have we merely an untimely fig, and an unripe pomegranate, hanging at our girdle? We ought not to carry home a bad report of the goodly land. There were large and ripe clusters on Mount Zion: what can we show as the fruit of it? A spirit, meek as the lily of the valley, fragrant as the rose of Sharon, and pure as the waters of Siloa? It ought to be so. Those who tarried at home will expect to divide the spoil with us. Esrom and Rachel, especially, will look to me for the first ripe fruits. Gleanings will not satisfy them." Thus he talked by the way.

"But who is this—that cometh up from the wil-

derness, leaning on her beloved!" It was Rachel now a leper, white as snow, leaning on Esrom. The pilgrims shrunk back, and stood afar off. They were ready to exclaim, "God has rejected her, although you vouched for her." Sheshbazzar turned to them with the majesty of an angel, saying, "There is hope in Israel concerning this thing. It is of the Lord; but it is for good, as in the case of MIRIAM." Turning to Rachel, with the mildness of an angel, he said, "Though you have lain among the pots, yet shall you be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

No. II.

VARIETIES FROM OVERSIGHT.

It is quite possible to have a sincere desire to be holy, and even to have some real love to holiness, and yet to overlook, not only some of the virtues or graces of a holy character, but also some of the most effectual means of becoming holy. A very great point is gained, however, when even *one* evangelical motive to holiness acquires, either as a check or as a charm, sanctifying influence over our character. And, happily, the motive or consideration which first lays hold upon the conscience is, usually, the solemn fact, that "without Holiness no one shall see the Lord." This is a consideration which may well awe and influence both our habits and spirit: and therefore, it is well that it is, in general, the first to rivet our attention. Perhaps no other motive is so well suited, at first, to our condition, when we are just setting out in the Divine life. It is readily understood, and easily remembered. And as it is the *fear* of not seeing God in heaven at last, quite as much as the *desire* of seeing Him, that influences our choice, we really need a motive which can work, at once upon both our hopes and fears; for one that appealed to either exclusively, would defeat itself then. An increase of fear without hope, or of hope without any fear, would do us no real good.

I do, therefore, congratulate you upon the hold which this familiar, but powerful motive, has obtained upon your understanding and conscience. Its authority over you is a good sign. It is, indeed, no small proof of being "led by the Spirit:" for as many as have been led by Him, began to follow holiness, because, "without" it, "no man shall see the Lord." It is, however, worthy of special attention, that all who have ever made any great progress in following holiness, have had to try the force of other motives. Indeed, they have found it *necessary* to do so; on finding that this one did not carry them far enough, or not so far as it did at first.

This is only what might be expected. No *single* motive, however sweet or solemn, can be equally influential at all times, or in all duties. Our circumstances change; and we change with them, not a little. Our best frames of mind too, are not permanent. Even our "first love," although it has not "waxed cold" exactly, has lost much of its original simplicity and tenderness.

We are not so susceptible or watchful in all things now, as when we first said to ourselves, whilst weeping at the foot of the Cross, "Without holiness I shall not see the Lord." Then, all our old regrets, and all our new desires, and all our hopes and fears for eternity, threw light upon the meaning of holiness, and warmth into the resolution to follow it, through good report and bad report. Thus the maxim was mighty, whilst we were melted with the wonders of redeeming love, and awed by the solemnities of eternity.

Now, we recollect this well. We cannot forget it. Accordingly, whenever we so fall off from the rule or the spirit of holiness, as to be startled at the declension, or to become afraid of consequences, we naturally say to ourselves, "Ah, this is the sad effect of losing my first love. Could I only recall the days of old, when my heart was all tenderness, and my conscience all timidity, I should find my old maxim as powerful and sufficient as ever." We have not a doubt of this. We are quite sure, that we should soon act as well as ever, if we could only *feel* again as we did at first. And there can be no doubt, that a renewed sense of redeeming love and of eternal things, would give great practical power to the command, "Follow holiness; without which no one shall see the Lord." The real question is, however, how to get back that state of mind? It does not return of itself, nor is it always found even when sought for with tears. Something good is, indeed, always found in answer to fervent prayer: but it is not often that even such prayer brings back all the light and love of the days of old. Even when it does, they are not such *long* days as they were at first, nor do they follow each other in such *close* succession.

You have observed and deplored all this. Did it ever occur to you, that there is no small danger of grieving the Holy Spirit, by thus making "the days of old," the *standard* for our present piety? The "good work" in the heart, of which He is the author and finisher, he "*carries on*" in its goodness, as well as keeps up in its being. Its mere *preservation* from utter extinction is not his great object. His care over "the root of the matter," is for the sake of the fruit it is capable of bearing. Accordingly, whenever we become less fruitful, or even cease trying to bring forth more fruit than we began with, He soon makes us to feel somewhat doubtful as to the very *life* of the root itself. Indeed, we are any thing but sure that the root of the matter is in us at all, when the branches of our profession become very barren. They will not, and cannot, be very fruitful, however, if we grieve the Holy Spirit, by neglecting or overlooking any of the *great motives* which he employs for sanctification.

Now, although the solemn consideration which I have been commending so strongly, is one of them, and a motive never to be laid aside or lost sight of, it is not the *chief* motive by which the Spirit works. He generally begins with it; but He never ends with it. And this is only what might be expected: for His special office is to *glorify* Christ. He will not, therefore, keep up the sanctifying power of any motive, however good, which is allowed to take that place in our attention, which belongs to the Saviour. Now

it is by the glory of Christ, as that shines in the *glam* of Revelation, that the Holy Spirit changes believers into the image of Christ. They are all predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Saviour: and as the Spirit will not depart from that *model*, neither will he deviate from this *mode* of sanctification. It will be just as true until the end of time, as it was at the beginning of Christianity, that it is by "beholding with open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," that we are changed into the same image, by the Lord the Spirit. He will, indeed, give law its place, and chastisement its place, and both promises and warnings their place, in making us partakers of the Divine holiness: but he will not allow one of them, nor even the whole of them, to *displace* the Saviour. He will make him all in all, in the midst of all the means by which he sanctifies our heart and character.

Now, even if we meant well in trying to be holy, on the strength of the *one* motive which first struck us, it is no wonder that its original influence has not kept us as it began. The holy Spirit will not permit even the holy fear of not "seeing the Lord" at last, to exempt us from the duty of contemplating "the glory of the Lord" now.

It may suit our sloth, or our convenience, or our self-complacency, to take for granted that we can go on very well in following holiness, by remembering its *necessity* as meetness for heaven: but this does not suit the glory of Christ; and, therefore, the Spirit will not work long, nor witness much, with this single fact, solemn as it is. By some process of conviction or chastisement, he will compel us to look sharply and seriously about us, for something more than a vague fear of hell, or a faint hope of heaven, as the means of sanctification. In a word, CHRIST must be "made unto us sanctification," as well as "wisdom, righteousness, and redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30.

Does this throw any light upon your case! You have both wondered and wept, because you have often found yourself going back, rather than forward, in piety; although you were not conscious of having given up or lost sight of any of the holy motives you began with. You have never changed your opinion of the beauty of holiness, nor lost your conviction of its necessity; and yet neither your opinion nor your persuasion has kept you up to the *mark* of your first efforts, in running the race set before you. You "did run well," when you began to follow holiness; but you have often slackened your pace, and even stumbled by the way. "What did hinder you?" for you did not intend to stop, nor expect to tire, nor did you even imagine that you could "weary in well doing."

Now, any one can tell you, or you can easily tell yourself, in explanation of this falling off, that you allowed some wrong habit or temper to grow upon you, or took up unduly with some earthly comfort, and thus grieved the Holy Spirit. And there is but too much truth in this account. It is not, however, the true explanation of your declensions. It is, in fact, itself, a *part* of your falling off, and not the real cause of it. That lay, in not "looking unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher" of your holiness, as well as of your faith. You

ran, even whilst you "did run well," looking to him for righteousness, far more than for sanctification. You did not, indeed, *overlook* either his image or his example; but they had obtained from you nothing like the same degree of attention, which you gave to his atonement and intercession. For once that you have tried to cast yourself into "the mould" of his image, you have cast yourself a thousand times upon his merits and grace. Not, however, that you have done the latter too often. No, indeed! Nor can you ever do it too often. But you have done the former too seldom, or too slightly. So, alas, have I!

Here, then, is the real cause of declension in piety; our leading fault and our chief defect are not confronted with the image of Christ from day to day, but left to the mere restraint of ordinary motives; and, as these are hardly sufficient to sustain even what is best and strongest in our character, it is no wonder that what is worst and weakest grows upon us, and thus brings the very spirit of piety to a low ebb. In a word; our besetting sin cannot be overcome, nor our weak side cured, by leaving them to take their chance, in common with those points of our character which are easily kept right. What is bad cannot be remedied, by the force of the general considerations which support what is good about us; any more than food can heal a wound, or clothing cure a fever. It is *medicine*, not food, that cures bodily disease: and it is the special, not the general motives to holiness, that can alone remove moral defects.

It is, I am aware, much more common, in speaking on this subject, to hear it said of our chief faults and defects, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." And this is perfectly true, if the maxim be taken (as the Saviour intended it to be) always in connection with learning of Him, and setting His image and example before us. Apart from doing that, however, even special prayer, and literal fasting, will not "cast out" a wrong habit nor a rash spirit, effectually. Accordingly, we have prayed, at times, very fervently, against the tendencies and temptations which betray us oftenest; and yet we have been soon betrayed by them again. Indeed, it has not always been from the want of *trying* to stand, that we have so often fallen. Others may say so, and even think so, when they see us falling away from some duty, or falling into some wrong spirit: but we knew the contrary. We have not, alas, "done all to stand," which we might have done: but we have done more than others give us credit for at times, and suffered more too than they imagine. Any one can see our faults: but God alone knows our struggles against them.

Well; the great reason why these struggles are so unsuccessful often, is, that we pray and plan without having the image of Christ distinctly before us, or without looking chiefly to that feature of His image which is most imperfectly reflected by us; for we can no more steer a right course through the sea of life by *any* star of the Saviour's character, than the mariner can steer through the ocean by any star of the skies. We must look oftener to that part of the image of Christ, which we are most unlike. And this must be done "with open face;" or with an honest desire and express

determination, to be "changed into the same image."

Here, now, comes on the trial of our spirit, and of our integrity too. Are we willing to learn a *new* lesson; willing to try a *new* experiment; willing to make a *new* effort, in order to be more holy? Nothing else or less than this, can cure the faults and imperfections we confess and deplore. Well; whether will you go on confessing and deploring them, or set yourself to contemplate the glory of Christ in the glass of Revelation, that that part of His glory which reproves them, may disperse them also? Would you rather succumb to them, than conquer them at this expense of time and thought? Would you rather give the time thus called for, to prayer for the forgiveness of them, than to meditation for their removal? Would you rather throw them on the blood of Christ for pardon, than upon the image of Christ for sanctification?

The questions are bringing out the *secrets* of your heart, upon the very surface of your conscience! Take great care, however, that the discoveries you are now making of "what is in" you, neither discourage you too much, nor irritate you at all: for it is as possible to *dispute* as to despond, when the unexpected discovery of some great *oversight* in religion, forces home upon us the conviction, that we have almost to begin anew, or, at least, to take new lessons on sanctification. We do not like to see the necessity of thus going to *school* again as meekly and humbly, as when we first sat down at the feet of Christ, saying with child-like simplicity, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Some, when they find that it must come to this, begin to doubt whether all their past experience has not been a delusion: and others allow themselves to be chafed into an impatient or speculative spirit, which tries to rid itself of the conviction, that new lessons and measures are thus indispensable. Thus, just according to the frame of our mind at the moment of this humiliating discovery, is the effect of the discovery itself. If we happen to be rather well pleased with the state of our piety upon the whole, we are in great danger of straining our ingenuity, to prove that we are doing pretty well, without studying the image of Christ more than usual. If, again, we happen to be in Doubting Castle, when this great oversight flashes upon our spirit, we are but too ready to put our "feet into the stocks" of utter despondency, or to conclude that we were never converted nor sincere. And, if we happen to be in a slothful or worldly temper, when we are brought to a dead stand by the startling fact, that we have never been so intent on having the image of Christ upon our soul, as the righteousness of Christ upon our sins; then Satan is sure to set our wits to work, to find out some way of evading the new duty, without exactly denying the necessity of more holiness.

I need not tell you that, in this case, the *compromising* spirit is the most dangerous. The fainting spirit, though painful, is not perilous. God will take care to revive it, and to enable it to look again towards His holy temple: but, "with the froward, He will show himself froward," and by some means take "vengeance on their inventions." He will *drive* us by rods to the image of

Christ, if we do not follow the leadings of His Spirit to the glass of Revelation; just as He drives us back to the Cross of Christ, when we forsake, or stand too far off from it.

How, then, do you feel inclined towards the duty and habit of "beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, that you may be *changed into his image*?" You have contemplated his glory, that you might be pardoned and accepted. You cannot afford, and you do not wish, to take your eye off from the glory of his power, which can save to the uttermost; nor from the glory of his blood, which can cleanse from all sin; nor from the glory of his righteousness, which can justify even the ungodly when they believe; nor from the glory of his grace, which is sufficient for all emergencies; nor from the glory of his intercession, which the Father heareth always with complacency; nor from the glory of his providence, which maketh all things work together for good to them who love him. In reference to all these features of the Saviour's personal and official glory, you desire "to see Jesus," and neither dread nor deprecate any evil so much as that of any "veil upon your heart," which would hide this brightness of his glory from your eye, or hide your need of it from your conscience. Thus, Creation would be a blank to you, if you were to lose sight of the glory of Christ. Your brightest hope, yea, your fondest desire, even in regard to heaven itself, is, "to see him as he is." You expect far more happiness from "beholding the glory of the Lamb in the midst of the throne," than from all the unveiled scenes and secrets of the natural and moral universe. You can easily conceive how you will never weary through eternity in looking up to him, saying, "I beseech thee show me thy glory:" for you know that it is *infinite*; and, therefore, that every new form of it can only be the harbinger of still newer and nobler manifestations "whilst immortality endures." There! I knew how you would feel upon this point. The "melody of your heart" is now quivering upon your lips, and smiles of complacency playing amidst the sweet words,

"There shall we see his face,
And never, never sin:
And from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in!"

O, you are not the woman, who should be afraid that the image of Christ cannot be impressed upon your heart and character! You have no occasion to despond or dispute, in the presence of a new lesson. You cannot *do well* without it, now that both the providence and the spirit of God have thus forced it upon your notice. Any attempt to do without it now, would be such a sin against light; and, in your case and mine, such an outrage upon conscience and reason, that we could look for nothing else than to be left to fall into some fatal error or apostacy, if we were not, from henceforth, to follow holiness, looking to the image of Christ, as our chief model and motive.

Our Bible, remember, brings this view of holiness before us, in a very peculiar and solemn connection; and we have no right, whatever be our views or feelings towards the word, "Predestina-

tion," to separate it from that word; for God has joined them together thus: "for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Rom. viii. 29. The necessity of this conformity, or likeness, to the mind and moral character of the Saviour, is not a thing to be evaded, by proving or disproving the Calvinistic system. The Arminian and the Calvinist must equally admit that whatever predestination mean, no one is "predestinated," but for a holy purpose. Both the calling and election taught in the Bible, is "unto holiness."

I have, perhaps, less patience with the vulgar notions of predestination than many. Indeed, I do not believe one word of any theory of sovereignty, the letter and spirit of which is not in perfect harmony with that sacred oracle. "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ." 1 Pet. i. 2. Whether, therefore, I take "predestinate" in the sense of purpose, decree, determination, or design, I cannot help seeing the sober fact, that God never could "predestinate" one class of his children to be very *like* Christ, and another to be very *unlike* Christ. Common sense revolts from the gross absurdity, that some are chosen to be holy, and others to be nearly unholy; that one is predestinated to be active, and another to be idle; that a few are elected to be amiable, and many to be waspish or peevish. No meaning of the word "predestinate," will agree with such anomalies. Now, although I certainly do not see any thing in the Bible, which conveys the shadow of an idea, that we are chosen or called *because* of any personal holiness, still, I cannot but see, that all predestination, as taught by Christ and his apostles, is, invariably and expressly, in *order* to produce holiness of heart and life.

Now, in what do you fail most? What grace or virtue of a holy character do you find most difficult to acquire and keep up? Perhaps a *devotional spirit*: that grace which is the guardian of all the rest! If this be the point in which you fail chiefly, you certainly do not fail through ignorance of its importance; for on no point have you more knowledge, or deeper convictions. I mean, you can neither forget nor doubt the connection between prayerfulness, and all growth in grace. You are quite sure that you could neither gain more ground in piety, nor even keep your present ground long, if you were to give up secret prayer. You see, at a glance, how the utter loss of a devotional spirit, would involve the certain loss of all hope, and place even the best points of your character in imminent peril. It is not, therefore, from any doubt of the inseparable connection between a devotional spirit, and soul-prosperity, that you ever become formal or heartless in your closet. You may try to persuade yourself at times, that less prayer will answer the purpose of keeping up both your hope and consistency; but you never imagine that they can be maintained without any prayer. Or, if at any time there be no prayer, it is because, for the moment, you have "no hope."

Here, then, is an informed judgment—a persuaded conscience—a feeling heart, upon the indispensable necessity of a devotional spirit: and yet,

you weary of your closet at times, and are often reluctant to go to it, as well as lifeless in it. Thus, it is not from the want of knowing better, that you either weary or decline in secret prayer. Your convictions of the sin and danger of neglecting your closet, are often strongest when you are most estranged from it. I mean, you are sometimes obliged to shut your eyes when passing it, or hurrying out of it; the *glare* of that guiltiness is so blinding and painful! You cannot bear to *think*, at that moment. And yet, even then, you intend, yea, vow to yourself, to shake off this lethargy; to break through this reluctance; and to return soon to your "quiet rest" under the mercy-seat; for you never depart from it in disgust, nor allow yourself to be drawn away from it, without leaving at it the promise of a speedy return. Thus, even when farthest off from the throne of grace, you are rather a *wanderer* than a deserter.

Has there been *much* of this wandering backward and forward between God and the world, in your past history! Do you still find it very difficult to continue "instant (perserving) in prayer?" Is the disposition to wander rather on the *increase*, than the *decrease*? Do you "quit the horns of the altar" oftener, or *longer* at one time, than formerly? If so, see the need you have to get hold of some *new* motive, which may both rally the relaxed power of your old motives, and render it impossible for you to fail or faint so much in prayer. Why; without this, you may come to "restrain prayer before God" altogether; and then, what can restrain you from utter apostasy?

You feel this. Well; there is a *glory* in the INTERCESSION of Christ in heaven, which cannot fail, if duly contemplated, to transform you into the image of his devotional spirit on earth. Its sweet influence cannot be resisted nor defeated, in any heart that has ever found relief in prayer, or that yet feels the necessity of prayer. The glory of the Saviour's intercession *will* change that heart into more of the image of his heart, than any other motive which can be employed for the revival, or the confirmation, of a devotional spirit.

In asserting this, thus strongly, nothing is farther from my design than to convey any idea of a charm, an impulse, or an influence, which would make devotion as natural and easy, as it is essential. I know of no *spell* on earth, or from heaven, which could keep up the spirit of prayer, apart from "watching unto prayer." Whoever will not take time, and heed, and care, in order to maintain devotional habits, will find no substitute for them, in sentimental impulses, or in ecstatic reveries. Prayer is a sober and solemn *duty*, as a sublime privilege; and, therefore, the duty must be performed, if the privilege would be enjoyed.

The glory of the Saviour's intercession in heaven, can, however, confirm the habit, and prolong the spirit of prayer. You may have said to yourself, without much effect,

"Cold mountains and the midnight air,
Witness'd the fervor of His prayer."

You may only have been afraid or ashamed when

you thought of him, as "rising a great while before day," or as "continuing all night alone," in prayer. You may only have felt reproved when you remembered how he "prayed more earnestly," as his agony in Gethsemane increased. Thus, whilst beholding all this in the glass of the Saviour's history, your heart may have only shrunk back from the sight, alarmed or humbled: not unwilling to pray; but unable to see how such prayer could be imitated, the time of it was so long, and the intensity so great, and the solitude so awful! And his special prayers are only examples for special emergencies: not *specimens* of daily or ordinary devotion. Accordingly, such long and lonely seasons of prayer, were not frequent even in his close walk and communion with God. It was only in his agony, that he kneeled down "three times" in one night. It was only just before or after taking great steps in his public mission and ministry, that he spent *whole* nights alone in prayer. The tenor of his devotional habits, from day to day, presented nothing to astonish or discourage his disciples. Accordingly, the evangelists relate only his *extraordinary* supplications, and never intimate that there was any thing inimitable or impracticable in his daily devotions.

These distinctions are too seldom drawn, when the Saviour is held up as an example of prayer: and thus both the charm and the check of his example are sadly defeated; for we see, although we do not like to say it, that the remarkable specimens of his devotion are impracticable rules, under *ordinary* circumstances. Accordingly, they are only complimented or admired: that is all,—except when we can do nothing but pray.

You have not less need to contemplate the glory of the Saviour's intercession in heaven, because you have now clearer ideas of his example on earth. Indeed, if the latter commend itself to your understanding and heart more than you expected it ever could do; and if you now see more in it than you did before, you may well conclude that the latter is worth studying, and likely to be still more useful.

Do not withdraw your attention, nor doubt this, because you remember all the texts which prove and illustrate the Intercession of Christ. I have, of course, nothing to tell you, but just what they contain: or rather, only what I see in them; which is far less than their full import. It will, however, be their true import, so far as it goes; if an "unveiled face" be any security against error or fancy. I have bared my face to the utmost, as well as bowed my knees, before "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would strengthen me with might by his Spirit, in the inner man, and thus enable me to comprehend something of the breadth and length, the height and depth of the love of Christ," as the ever-living, never-wearying Intercessor before the throne! I have implored for this grace, not so much in order that I may be able to write on the subject, as that the Interceding Love of Christ may "constrain me to *abide* in the secret place of the Most High."

Now, this is just what you want;—to be kept prayerful on earth, until you are ready for the harp of praise in heaven. Well; it is just as true, that

you cannot be "saved from wrath" but by the interceding LIFE of Christ, as that you cannot be "justified," but by the atoning death of Christ. It is because he ever liveth to make intercession, that "he is able to save to the uttermost (or completely) them that come unto God by him." Heb. vii. 25. Thus, his continuing to *intercede*, and our continuing to *come* unto God by him, are inseparably connected with the perfection or completion of our salvation.

This deserves special attention. Some speak as if they thought, that justification from the condemning sentence of the law completed, or at least made *sure*, their salvation. Paul, however, speaks very differently on this point. He avows the need, as well as triumphs in the prospect, of being "saved from wrath," through the life of Christ, even after having been justified by the death of Christ. Hear the apostle; and shut your ears to "the instruction which causeth to err!" "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from WRATH by him." Why? How? "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be *SAVED* by his *life*." Rom. v. 8—10. Thus, the "reconciled," yea, the "justified," need to be "saved from wrath," by the LIFE of Christ, even after his death has fully and for ever delivered them from the curse of the law. And for an obvious reason: the law is not the *only* thing we have broken and violated. Our sins against the gospel, in trifling with it so long: and against the Holy Spirit, in grieving him so much; and against Providence, in improving it so little; and against the Saviour himself, in loving him and glorifying him so partially: these sins deserve "*sorer punishment*" than even our transgressions against the moral law! Accordingly, Paul never represents the wrath of God as confined to sins against the Law. He says explicitly, "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rom. i. 18. And your own experience agrees with, and thus confirms, the apostle's doctrine, on this subject. Your sins against GRACE, alarmed and humbled you more than your sins against the law. You may be able, by setting yourself to *reason* on general principles, to resolve all your sins into breaches of the Divine Law, as that is the general rule of the Divine government: but you *feel*, whenever your heart and conscience follow the convicting leadings of the spirit, that past neglect of salvation, and present misimprovement of Grace, are your chief sins. And well you may reckon them so!

Now, although it be true (and a glorious truth it is) that the "blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," whether against law or grace; it is not true that you have applied this glorious truth to yourself fully yet; or as God has revealed and intended it for your encouragement,—if you think *only* of the sacrifice of Christ, when you remember these words. In the ORACLE of God, they stand inseparably connected with the Intercession of Christ also, and with our attention to it as well as to his atonement. Look at this fact for yourself. 1 John i.

The subject of this chapter is, fellowship or communion with God: the very thing we ought to desire and aim at in prayer; for it is in connection with it, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Hence John says expressly, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness," (persist in known and allowed sin,) "we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another," (with each other,) and (thus walking consistently and prayerfully) "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Now observe how John connects this cheering truth with the Intercession, as well as with the Atonement of Christ. ii. 1. Knowing but too well from his own experience, that walking in the light is not perfect, even when very conscientious upon the whole; and that sins do occur even with the devotional, the apostle adds, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Thus John connects "cleansing from all sin," just as Paul connects "deliverance from all wrath," with the Life of Christ as our advocate, as well as with the death of Christ as our propitiation.

"Of the things which we have spoken, This is the *SCM*; we have such an high priest, set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens:" an *interceding*, as well as an atoning mediator; and our complete salvation from all sin and all wrath, depends upon applying to him in both capacities.

Now you are somewhat prepared to contemplate the glory of the Saviour's intercession: for you now see that it is as *essential* to your salvation as his sacrifice! It is, in fact, the continued application of that sacrifice unto the soul, just as his crucifixion was the one offering of it to God.—Thus he ever lives to bestow, what he once died to obtain. Or, as the old divines express it, "whilst the *imputation* of all the blessings of the covenant is by the death of Christ, the *application* of them is by the life of Christ."

I have, I fear, tried your patience, and even seemed tantalizing your expectations, by leading you thus round and round "the golden altar" of intercession, which is before the throne, without having once attempted to unveil its glories. I feel this, in common with you. It is not, however, lost time; for, see how much better we understand and appreciate the work of Christ in heaven!—The idea of his appearing for us there, and praying for us there, if always pleasing, is now as momentous in importance, as it is pleasing in fact. We feel now, that the intercession of Christ is a provision for more than our support and consolation, in the day of trouble; for more than our escape, in the hour of temptation; for more than purifying our prayers, by its "much incense." It is also and equally the provision of God, for the continuance of mercy to pardon sins against grace, and for the continuance of the Spirit to sanctify us, as well as to help our infirmities. Thus, we cannot regard it now, as merely a pleasing fact, which may be very useful in seasons of trial and temptation. Jesus "ever liveth to make interces-

sion for us;" because we for ever need both mercy and grace to our souls, whatever be the state of our health, our spirits, our temporal affairs, or even our piety; for when all these are in their "best estate," we can no more do without his intercession, than when they are in their lowest and worst estate.

It would have been of no permanent use, to have taken you to the glass of Christ's interceding glory, before you had torn off from your face, and thrown away, those veils which hid from your sight, more than one half of your *need* of his prayers. The glory of his CENSER, like the glory of his CROSS, cannot be clearly seen, until the need of them be deeply felt. But now, it is as easy for you to behold it, as for me to show it. Indeed, you want no assistance from me, now that you stand "with open face," before the mirror of revelation. You cannot but see in that glass, the glory of the Saviour's condescension, in thus *remembering* you for ever: the glory of his sympathy, in thus *pitying* you for ever: the glory of his patience, in thus *bearing* with you for ever: the glory of his love, in thus *praying* for you for ever: the glory of his holiness, in thus suing out for you and carrying on in you, *conformity* to his own image! Thus, all this glory shines in his intercession. And, that it is *transforming* glory, I appeal to your own heart at this moment; you are not unwilling to pray now. Your heart is praying! You will not shun the mercy-seat to-night, nor hurry away from it.

Well; why not look at this glory of Christ, every morning and evening? Consider, you *must* think of something, if you would keep up the habit of coming to the throne of grace. You never do approach it without some motive or reason. Now the question is, what is the *best* motive? Happily this is not a matter of opinion or conjecture. God has settled and set forth the grand influential motive to regular prayer thus:—"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. iv. 14. "Having, therefore, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."—Heb. x. 19. The intercession of the Lamb slain is, you see, the chief *magnet* of the mercy-seat. It is all very well, and even necessary, to remember from day to day, the *duty* of praying, and the *danger* of not praying, and the *profit* of prayer, and the *example* of the prayerful. You cannot have too many links between your heart and the throne of grace; but still, the link you need most, and which strengthens all the rest, is, the consideration, that the intercessor as much expects you to bow regularly and reverentially at the throne of grace, as you expect and need him to stand on your behalf before the throne of glory.

Your attention must not be confined, however, even to the devotional image of the Saviour. Indeed, that cannot be copied successfully, if the soft and social features of his character are not imitated, and its pervading spirit studied.

Now, those who have minutely studied the

character of the Saviour, (as the grand and lovely features of it were called forth during his abode in our world,) will find it difficult to determine whether there is most to *admire*, or to *imitate* in it—there is so much of both. Many features of his character are, indeed, inimitable in any degree. We can neither copy the authority of his omnipotence, nor imbibed the spirit of his omniscience:—He must stand *alone* on the sea of Tiberias calming the tempest, and at the sepulchre of Bethany raising the dead, and thus tread all the field of miracles, as he trod the wine-press of the wrath of God; for, “of the people there can be none with him.” The Nathaniels must be content to pray under their fig-trees undiscovered by human eyes, and many may be devils at the sacramental table without being detected by the officiating minister; for the gift of “discerning spirits,” and the power of working miracles, died with the apostles, and resides now only in the person of Christ.

In the *higher* walks of his life, it is therefore equally useless and unnecessary to propose the example of the Saviour as a model for imitation, or as furnishing maxims for our conduct in life—there, we can only admire and adore, without the least hope of acquiring any resemblance to his miraculous excellencies. But far different is the state of the case, in regard to the *VIRTUES* of his character, and the *spirit* of his miracles; for our ordinary actions may be done in the temper of his mighty works, and the every-day duties of life and godliness may be discharged in the same disposition which led him to heal the sick and raise the dead. If, therefore, we cannot say to our buried Lazaruses, “Come forth,” we can cherish the tenderness which “wept” at the tomb. If we cannot rebuke fever in a house, we can soothe the family by sympathizing attentions. If we cannot turn water into wine, we can be thankful for a cup of cold water, and administer it in love, when we have nothing better to take or give; and thus have the *spirit*, although not the splendor of the Saviour’s actions, running through and irradiating our own doings.

In regard to our relative duties, nothing *extraordinary* is expected from us. No bereaved mother looks to us for the restoration of her only son from the bier; nor any suffering friend for health; all that they calculate upon or expect is cordial sympathy and fervent prayer; so that the spirit of Christ’s miracles will fully meet all relative desires.

Now, what was the spirit that distinguished the benevolent actions of the Saviour? Not ostentation—for he wished to hide some of his mightiest works; not partiality—for his kindness was as general as it was generous; not caprice—for he was uniformly accessible to all ranks, and, like the sun, rose every day of his ministry upon the dark world, in light and warmth. His temper could be calculated upon to a certainty, at all times and under all circumstances; and those who had been charmed by his gracious words and gentle manners on the Mount of Olives, were sure, when they left his feet, to find on their return the same looks of love on his face, and the same law of kindness on his lips. So uniform was he in his whole character while on earth, that the apostolic boast was

—“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever!”

Now the mild and lovely character of the Saviour may be, and ought to be, employed, both as an encouragement to come unto him for salvation, and as an example to be copied by all who have committed their souls into his hands.

It is an encouragement to apply to him for salvation. For it is not by the death of Christ only that we learn his willingness to save unto the uttermost: *that*, indeed, places his good will towards man beyond all reasonable doubt, because no greater proof of it could be given than dying that we might live. Demonstration can go no farther; but the same conclusion may be fairly drawn from the uniform meekness and gentleness of his character; these form the steady day-light of his love to man, as his sufferings and death are that love “*shining in the greatness of its strength.*” Indeed, he intended the sweetness of his temper, and the suavity of his manners, to illustrate and exemplify both the genius of his gospel, and the loving kindness of God. Hence the explicit assurance, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” We are therefore warranted to apply unto God and the Lamb, as freely as the mothers of Israel brought their infants to be blessed—as freely as the friends of the sick brought them to be healed—as freely as the publicans and sinners came to sit at Jesus’ feet. And if we would not hesitate, were he on earth, to present our infants to him for his blessing, we need not hesitate to venture our souls upon his atoning blood. His heart is as open to welcome now, as his arms were then.

“Give him, my soul, thy cause to plead,
Nor doubt the Father’s grace.”

But his character is intended also, and should be employed, as an example to copy. The meekness and gentleness of Christ are as binding in their practical authority, as they are encouraging in their benevolent aspect. They are not, however, so much imitated as they are admired; but rather complimented than copied. Indeed, there are heavy complaints and charges current against many of the avowed followers of Christ. It is thought and said, that in the present day they are not characterised by meekness nor gentleness. They ought to be like the cherubim upon the ancient mercy-seat; of the same metal and polish as the propitiatory which they stand upon; and, if in general they are not so, it is imperative on your sex, as well as the pulpit, both to expose and improve the wrong *spirit* and the wrong *manners* of the age—that all who have been “cast in the mould of the gospel” may be polished, as well as moulded. 1 Peter iii. 1, 6. Thus, as women were the first at the sepulchre of Christ to see him alive, so they are chiefly charged to copy his meekness and gentleness, both for their own sake, and to win others.

Now (without joining issue with the sweeping charges just referred to) it must be acknowledged that some of the avowed followers of Christ are unamiable both in their spirit and deportment. Some of them are consequential, and others capricious; some reserved, and others morose; some

irritable and others peevish; some rash, and others captious. These things ought not to be. But still, whilst we deplore and condemn them as *unchristian*, we ought to bear in mind how much *worse* the persons chargeable with them must have been if they had had no religion; for if they are disagreeable notwithstanding all the restraints of conscience, they must have been *intolerable* without them. As a good man once said of his wife, when a neighbor wondered how he could bear her unhappy temper, "I keep thinking how much worse it would be if she had *no* grace."—And the fact is, it is with some minds as with some fields—there are thorns and briars in them even after much pains has been taken to cultivate the soil; and, although this cannot be too deeply lamented, we must not forget what the soil would have been without cultivation.

It is not intended by these remarks, to palliate, or apologise for wrong tempers, but simply to present the case in all its bearings and aspects. It ought, therefore, to be stated explicitly that it is the *difficulty* of conquering them, rather than reluctance to relinquish them which keeps so many serious persons in bondage to bad tempers. They have tried to overcome them, and failed; and, therefore, they are tempted to invent, or avail themselves of excuses for what seems, in their case, unconquerable. But the fallacy of these excuses is demonstrable, and ought to be demonstrated to all professed Christians, that they may not have recourse to them, either openly or secretly.

Some excuse their bad tempers upon the plea that they are constitutional or natural. But, if this were a valid excuse for any wrong temper, it would be so for any vice, and might be employed to palliate lust, intemperance, and revenge; for the slaves of these vile passions find them equally *constitutional*,—if that could justify them. We ought, therefore, to be exceedingly cautious how we sanction a maxim which may be interpreted in behalf of *any* sin; for although we may want it only to excuse a failing, others may employ it to excuse a gross fault.

It is certain, however, that some temperaments are naturally sweeter than others, and that some persons, without any effort, can be both meeker and gentler than others who make great efforts to "rule their spirit." Immense differences, in this respect, are discernible in the same family, and show themselves in children, before temper can be an *acquired* habit of the mind. Now this obvious truth may be allowed to have all the weight, both as fact and argument, which any one, who has not a *selfish* purpose to answer, can desire; but what then? If the natural temper of my mind be irritable, or peevish, or capricious, the gospel is able, and intended to subdue it,—*demand*s its subjugation to "the mind of Christ;" *insists* upon it as an essential part of Christian character.—Unless, therefore, I watch and pray against the besetting sin of my spirit, either my professed allegiance to Christ is mere pretence, whatever reliance upon him I may avow; or if it be not, I am preparing for myself, like Rachel, some "vengeance on my inventions," which may be as trying, if not so startling, as her leprosy.

ALLEGORY. No. 2.

RACHEL'S EXILE.

FROM the moment that the leprosy fell upon Rachel like snow on Lebanon, the *moral* leprosy of her spirit began to melt and pass away, like snow from the golden pinnacles of the Temple. Like Miriam, the sister of Moses, she understood and bowed to the rebuke of Jehovah at once. Whilst Esrom only exclaimed with Job, "Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me," Rachel meekly said, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, for I have sinned against him. There is no need, Esrom, that God should speak from the whirlwind, in order to explain this visitation. It explains itself in a loud voice; and that, not from the 'secret place of thunder.' It is vengeance on our inventions!" Esrom then felt that he had been the leader in these inventions; and thus, that he was the chief cause, although not the chief victim, of the vengeance. He, therefore, resolved at once to brave all the consequences of watching over Rachel, during her banishment into the Beershebean wilderness. He would have borne her leprosy itself, could he have removed it from her to himself. He did what he could. He pitched her tent in the wilderness, with his own hands, under the shadow of a great rock, and close to a well of living water. He strewed it with the myrrh of Carmel, and the camphire of Engedi. He placed in it the vessel with which he had drawn water from the fountain of Siloam, when he first appeared before God in Zion. Skins, also, of the wild goats of Bethel, and of the rams of Nebaioth, were in it for a couch; parched corn and grapes for food. And in its recess, under a vase of lilies of the valley, he placed her little ark of gopher-wood, in which her ancestral copy of the law was deposited. He had saved that treasure, on the day when the elders pronounced the house of her fathers unclean, and whilst the people were razing it to the ground.

Nothing gratified Rachel so much, as this attention. That ark contained the covenant of her God, and her own covenant with Esrom; for the deed of her betrothment lay beneath her pentateuch and psalter. She did not forget her ark on the day of her exile from her father's house; but she was afraid to bring it away under the veil of her leprosy. She felt, as if its sacred contents would be less dishonored by perishing in the ruins of her habitation, than by escaping in the shadow of her shame. She was even afraid to name it to Esrom; and he was too considerate to name it to her. Rachel had never wept during her calamity. Her eyes burned like coals of juniper in a furnace of brass; not like dew-stars in the firmament. Esrom hoped that nature, as well as grace, would find relief, by the *surprise* he had prepared for them, in the little sanctuary in the wilderness. He judged aright. She entered the tent leaning upon his arm. Its coolness did not revive her, nor its fragrance soothe her; but when her eye fell upon her ark, her spirit melted. Rachel wept. Esrom blessed the God of his fathers, in silence. It was a holy hour! Angels heard each of them say unto God, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget

thy commandments." THE ANGEL OF THE COVENANT heard each of them cry, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

It was evening: and this was their evening sacrifice. When it closed, Esrom said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, he will not despise; whoever else may do so." With this salutation, Esrom left the tent; and, having wrapped himself in the skin of a young lion, which had perished in the swellings of Jordan, he ascended the great rock above the tent, to keep watch during the night. He watched "unto prayer," also. So did Rachel.—Neither slumbered nor slept. Both prayed as in the days of old. Neither remembered the elders, except to ponder, how men of *one* idea may have much devotion.

When Esrom entered the tent in the morning, he found Rachel still a leper; but the unnatural brightness of her eyes had been softened by her tears, and the dry and deathly coldness of her hand was moderated. She had just deposited the covenant in her ark, and replaced the vase of lilies upon it,—so arranged, that their broad leaves, like wings, overshadowed it.

"The emblem is but too true, Esrom," she said: "the leaves of the frailest of the flowers of the field, not the wings of the CHERUBIM have overshadowed my ark. I rather *garlanded* than guarded it; and, therefore, the glory departed.—Will that glory ever return? I have read the covenant of promise this morning, with relish: shall I ever read it again with hope? Will my present penitence be as fading as the lilies of the valley?"

Esrom had not anticipated this application of his device. He had placed the flower she loved most, upon the ark she deemed lost; that pleasure might soften her surprise, when she found it again. "I meant no moral, Rachel," he said, "when I set the vase of lilies upon the lid of the ark." But Sheshbazzar would say,—"*The root of them will not die, when their leaves wither, and their fragrance passes away. Their root is still in the valley, and will continue to yield flowers in its season, whilst it continues in its native soil. Let us keep our spirit in the valley; and we shall not only grow as the lily, but cast forth our roots as Lebanon.*" Rachel had never named Sheshbazzar, from the moment she was pronounced to be a leper. She saw how his high character was *staked* upon her integrity; and felt that she was not likely to redeem, by her own future character, the *pledges* he had given to the elders. He often vouched for her sincerity to them; and now, they said, "God had branded her a hypocrite." And, what answer could Sheshbazzar give to this charge against his judgment? She could think of none—if she were to be a leper until the day of her death: and she had no hope of recovering.

"We owe it, Esrom, to Sheshbazzar," said Rachel, "to see him no more. He is too deeply committed by me, to reinstate his authority in the synagogue, without disowning me. I am expelled from the synagogue already, and I will not expose him to the painful necessity of confirming the sentence of the elders. It is well that he had not

'to cast me out!' He must have done it, had he been at home: but, although he would have done it gently as the angel of the Lord drove out our first parents from Paradise, I am glad, for his sake and my own, that it is not to do! And, as he can never own me again, I will never render it necessary for him to disown me."

"It never will be necessary to disown you, Rachel!" Esrom replied. "Sheshbazzar will soon have the pleasure to write your name anew, amongst the daughters of the covenant in Beersheba, and even to enroll it amongst the living in Jerusalem; for already the plague has ceased to spread on you, and I have caught no infection. It is no longer 'a fretting leprosy.' He who wounded you, has begun to heal you; and, as in the case of Miriam, God will perfect that which concerneth you, and restore to you the timbre of his praise, at the tabernacle of his presence. Be of good cheer: he is healing our blackslidings, and he will blot out our iniquities, for his own name's sake. I feel warranted, already, by his faithfulness as the hearer of prayer, to provide the 'two living birds, the cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop,' for the day of your purification in the temple." Having said this, Esrom led her to the door of the tent, and left her for the day without fear; being well aware that neither the shepherds nor the hunters in the wilderness, would venture near the tent of leprosy. He returned to Beersheba to guide his affairs with discretion; and, that his kinsmen, and neighbors, and his men servants and maid servants, might see that he had not tempted the Holy One of Israel, by waiting on Rachel. He calculated the *effect* of appearing on his farm, and in the streets, humbled, but unhurt. The bloom of health was on his cheek, and the simple majesty of the palm-tree in his form. He was grave, but not sad; perfectly composed, but perfectly natural. No one could suspect him of acting a part. His object was to moderate the clamor of the rash, and to enable the prudent to suspend their judgment: but he employed no stratagem. He left his appearance and spirit to make their own impression. And many were silenced, and not a few softened. Some indeed said, that "the thin yellow hair" (Lev. 13) of a fretting leprosy would soon be visible on his brow or his beard. Others affirmed that the rose on his cheek, was 'a whitish red,' already. But all wondered after him; and some prayed for him, that "the desire of his eyes" might not be "taken away" by the stroke of judgment.

During seven days Esrom went and returned thus, between Beersheba, and the tent in the wilderness; his step still firm, and his countenance unchanged. Every evening he reported to Rachel, the *progress* of public opinion in Beersheba: and every morning he gave directions to his ploughmen and vine-dressers, to his masons and carpenters, to his hewers of wood and drawers of water, just as he was wont to do when he began to manage his farm, and to rebuild the house of his fathers. All his conduct and spirit indicated an humble, but lively hope of Rachel's recovery. Thus, although he said nothing to the people, he compelled them to *think* much.

This course, Esrom pursued for Sheshbazzar's sake; that no *burst* of mockery or upbraiding

might meet him, on his return from Jerusalem. He had planned, also, to meet the good old man by the way; deeming that the sight of Rachel would shock him less, than the clamors of the people. He intended also to detain him a day and a night in the wilderness, that by special and united prayer, the eagle and the eaglets of Beersheba might fully renew their youth, before resuming the *nest* of their youth. It was, therefore, with joy unspeakable he heard Sheshbazzar say at once, on seeing Rachel, "There is hope in Israel concerning this leprosy:" for any salutation less cordial or prompt, would not have silenced the clamor of the pilgrims, nor revived her spirit. Her heart was too "sick" with suspense to endure "hope deferred." Had Sheshbazzar been silent at first, or but slow to speak, or had he spoken with less confidence or tenderness than Esrom, her heart would have broke. He knew this; and like Noah, took his weary and weak dove into the ark at once.

It had been with great difficulty, Esrom had persuaded her to meet "the guide of her youth" in the wilderness. Even when she consented to go forth, she said, "Jephthah's daughter knew not the pang, which her sudden appearance would inflict upon her father. Her timbrels and dances brought him 'very low;' but she was the unconscious cause of his anguish. Sheshbazzar will be equally shocked, and what can I say when he rends his clothes, exclaiming, 'Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low; thou art one of them that trouble me.'" "Nay," said Esrom, "such lamentation will not rush to his lips; like Moses with Miriam, he will intercede for thee at once, and be the first to welcome thee unto his camp and counsel again; for, like Moses, he is as meek as he is wise."

The case of Miriam was so often quoted and referred to by Esrom, as a parallel to her own case, that Rachel could not forget it altogether. Again and again she proved to herself, that she was not a Miriam, but in her sin and punishment: for she had never been as a *sister* to the elders she had spoken against; nor had her *timbrel* ever led the song of the Red Sea, when the people celebrated the Exodus. But still the parallel haunted her. It was a case in point, so far as their sin and sentence were alike:—and, might not their pardon be alike too? This question, if it did not create hope, maintained prayer. And when Sheshbazzar identified her case with Miriam's at once, her prayer, which had only risen upon the one wing of submissive desire, rose on the twin wings of meek solicitude and humble hope. "Sheshbazzar as well as Esrom," she said to herself, "takes the same view of my case." Whilst Rachel was reflecting thus, Sheshbazzar dismissed the pilgrims of Beersheba. "I tarry in the wilderness," he said, "to lead on this lamb of the flock as she can bear: return ye to the fold in peace; and see that ye limit not the Holy One of Israel by interpreting her calamity, as Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar did the trials of Job. Leave it to them, to mistake providence; and to Satan to impugn motives. Let us who are aged, especially, judge ourselves, that we may not be judged: for if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry tree, if it be-

come fruitless?" The pilgrims departed in silence; but not in sympathy with their leader, or with his lamb. They were afraid to speak; but they were not afraid to suspect the prudence of Sheshbazzar, or the sincerity of Rachel. He understood their looks; but said nothing more. He turned from them; and, "leaning on the top of his staff, worshipped," until they were out of sight. Whilst thus musing, the fire burned: then, spake he with his tongue. "I am too much humbled by the leprosy of the *spirits* of all flesh, to be shocked or surprised at bodily leprosy. Not that I think lightly of it. It is the strangest of all God's 'strange works;' his rod of rods, and cup of trembling, when he visits our sins with stripes, and our iniquities with chastisements; but lo, all these things worketh God, (and many such things are with him,) that 'he may save souls alive.'" Some souls can only be saved from unhallowed curiosity and vain imaginations, by startling judgments which, like the sword of the Destroying Angel, so weaken their hearts in "one night," that they dare not turn again to folly: and others require a flaming sword perpetually before their eyes, or a clearing cross upon their shoulder, in order to keep them from folly; because, like Eve, they are least suspicious of themselves when most happy, and like Lucifer, most aspiring when brightest. The Son of the Morning speculated in heaven, and the Daughter of the Morning, in paradise; and both fell.

"Rachel, thou hast fallen too: but not like Lucifer, to rise no more; but like Eve, to be raised up again. I meet thee in the wilderness; but not like Cain, fleeing from the presence of Jehovah; but like Abel, worshipping before the Shekinah. God will not despise the sacrifice of a broken spirit, in the desert; and he will accept thy burnt offering, in the sanctuary. Mercy will yet rejoice over judgment, and over thee, with singing."

"Sheshbazzar, I was the tempter," said Esrom; "and first in the transgression. But for me,—Rachel had not fallen." "And, but for you Rachel had not been restored," said Sheshbazzar. It was "a dark saying:" neither Esrom nor Rachel understood it; but neither could forget it. "Is there any thing *before me*," said Esrom, "which, without her, I could not go through?" "Does this leprosy bear upon my betrothed, as well as upon myself?" said Rachel. "I will explain in the tent," said the old man.

No. III.

VARIETIES, FROM MISTAKES.

WHATEVER may be the faults or the defects of our character and spirit, there is not one of them so peculiar, but that some ancient proverb might be found to reprove it, or some experimental maxim to condemn it. Indeed, if either exposures or reproofs could cure faults, the conscientious would soon be faultless: for, what sin, of heart or life, has not been found and declared, by many, to be "an evil and a bitter thing?" Experience, as well as Revelation, has planted a "flaming

sword" upon the gate of all wrong habits and tempers; and, although the sword of the former does not, like that of the latter, "turn every way," nor turn at all in the hands of "Cherubim," it turns and flames too, enough to render us without excuse when we yield to temptation. For, who, of all the hosts of the peevish, the impatient, the irritable, or the rash, ever left a *dying* testimony in favor of their besetting sin? Many a tombstone in the church-yards of our cities and villages, records the domestic happiness and the public esteem, which the virtues and graces of Christian character gained for their possessors; but not one tells of a vice that did no harm, nor of an imperfection that did any good. Gravestones often flatter the dead; but they never say that a passionate or peevish woman was happy, in heart or at home, notwithstanding her ill temper. They never ascribe conjugal love nor maternal influence, to fashionable follies, or to frivolous accomplishments. Neither the toilette nor the piano, the pencil nor the harp, is ever engraven on the URN, as the *explanatory* emblem of the character of the deceased; except, indeed, she has been an *actress*!

But not only do proverbs and experience condemn our faults: we ourselves condemn the same faults in others, whenever they affect our own interest or convenience. Then we are quite sure, that one might be more courteous, and another more reasonable, and a third more amiable, and a fourth far less talkative, if they would only try! Thus we see no difficulty to prevent them from being to us, all they ought to be; and no excuse for them, when they offend us. "Is it not very easy to be polite to one? What good do they get to themselves, from their high airs, or from their snappish humors, or from their capricious conduct? I have no patience with such insolence, nor with such impertinencies."

There it is! We can chafe ourselves into a bad spirit, by chiding, even in thought, the faults and follies of others. Let them only interfere with our comfort, or be somewhat more and greater than our own, and we can be lawgivers and judges against both.

Even this is not the weakest nor the worst side of our hearts, in regard to our faults. We can condemn them in ourselves, and yet continue them. We can lament them, and yet allow them to go on. We can even give up excusing them, and yet expect others to forgive and forget them: or rather to overlook them entirely; for we do not like the idea of being *forgiven* by any one but God.

Would that this were all! But it is not. We are quite capable, even after having found our besetting sin of habit or temper, a hindrance to prayer, and a dead weight on hope, to give way to it still. Who has not resolved, at a sacrament it embittered, or under a chastisement it had provoked, or at the breaking up of a backsliding it had brought on, that it should be cut off and cast away! But the casting away, has not followed the cutting off. The hand has held it, after the heart condemned it. It has got back to its old place again, either by some ligament which was left uncut, or under the promise that it would no longer betray us.

Why is it, that neither the experience of ages, even when its warnings become proverbs; nor our own experience, even when it is bitter, has power enough to correct what they thus condemn? Why are we so slow to do and become, all that we feel we ought to do and be? This is not explained by saying, that nothing but the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit can subdue our faults. That is very true: but it was equally true years ago; and yet, in some things, we are as faulty as ever. Thus the Spirit does not touch them, when we let them alone: except, indeed, when he strikes at them by the sharp rods of providence, or frowns upon them by dark clouds of desertion; and neither of these modes of communicating sanctifying grace is "joyous, but grievous," however it may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness afterwards.

It is very easy to *talk* fine things about sanctifying grace: but the sober truth is, that that grace is just Divine power giving *effect* to the gospel itself, or to providence along with the gospel, or to eternal things along with both. The Spirit works by them all in turn, and by them all together; but never without any of them. He may begin sanctification by affliction, whilst the gospel is not much known: or he may begin it by the gospel, whilst affliction is quite unknown: but he will not carry it on long in either way. He will lead out the afflicted to the Cross of Christ more fully; or he will lay some cross upon the believing, when their faith itself becomes less purifying. This is the general rule of both the work and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Whilst his right hand is for ever glorifying Christ by the gospel, his left is often doing the same by the furnace. He thus sanctifies by the truth, and by providence.

There is, however, a way of carrying on sanctification, without *much* affliction. There is a "needs be" for some, in the case of all Christians; and, accordingly, all are chastised more or less. "For, what son is he" (or what daughter is she) "whom the Father chasteneth not?" Still, as the whole and sole object of chastisement is, the taking away of sin, or the promotion of holiness; that object may be secured in some degree by other means. Indeed, God *prefers* other means to the rod, when they answer the purpose. Judgment is always his "strange work," even in sanctification. I mean, he does not "afflict willingly." Let any sin be really given up, or any neglected duty taken up, on the ground of any *holy* motive whatever, and he can dispense with the rod. Yea, he will be delighted to have, thus, no occasion to use it. Well; the contemplation of "ETERNAL THINGS" can supersede the necessity of temporal affliction, and especially of spiritual calamity, in many cases.

Did you ever observe this fact in your Bible? If not, you have a new and a noble lesson to learn. I say "noble," because if the sight of the words ETERNAL THINGS, suggest to your mind only dismal, or dark, or even awful ideas, you have yet to study the subject. All eternal things are, indeed, solemn: so are all the perfections of God; so are all the glories of the Lamb: so are all the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit: but their solemnity does not detract from their sweetness. It heightens their beauty by hallowing it. And had you contemplated eternity, as you have the Divine

character, "in the face of Jesus," the light of its glory, instead of intimidating you, would have charmed or soothed you. Eternal things present no dark side, to a woman who loves holiness, and desires to feel their sanctifying influence upon herself. She is as welcome to look upon them without fear, as to look unto Jesus with hope. Her hope may be as full of immortality, as it is full of Christ.

Do you doubt this at all? Just observe, for a moment, how John proves it, when he directs our attention to the second coming of Christ. That glorious appearing of the great God, our Saviour, has nothing appalling, in John's account of it. He is referring to it for sanctifying purposes; and therefore all he says is soft and simple. "Beloved, we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Thus, nothing but *likeness* to Christ is presented to our view, when John points to the grand assize of the universe. Why? Because the apostle wanted to commend the *holy* influence of a hope full of immortality. Hence he adds immediately, "Every man who hath this hope in Christ (the hope of being perfectly and eternally like him) purifieth himself even as he is pure." 1 John iii. 2, 3. Thus, you learn, that a purifying hope cannot go too calmly forth, nor too far out, amongst the solemnities of the last day. We may look forward to it with as much composure as angels, and with more expectation than angels: for it will be no new era in their holiness; whereas it will be both the fulness of time and the fulness of eternity, in our moral history. We shall be like Christ, when we "see him as he is!"

Now, it is "this hope" which can, when fully embraced and cherished, set aside the necessity of some afflictions, by setting us to purify ourselves after the model of the Saviour's pureness. What this hope does in sanctifying our character and spirit, neither the furnace nor the rod will be employed to do. The Holy Spirit will work without the *fire* of Providence, in changing us into the image of Christ, just in proportion as we look with open face to the Glory of Christ, for the express purpose of imitating him. Yes; let his glory change us "from glory to glory," or from one heavenly virtue on to another; and whatever conformity to the divine image we gain by this purifying process of holy contemplation will lessen the necessity for severe purifying discipline.

How do you like this plan of following holiness, by looking to the character and coming of Christ, as you go forward on your pilgrimage? Will you rather take your chance of being purified by the furnace and the rod, than take the trouble of purifying yourself by a studied imitation of the Saviour? Will you rather leave your "dross" to be purged by the refining fire of providence, than place it thus, from day to day, under the heat of the Sun of Righteousness, and beneath the light of a hope full of immortality?

True; it is not easy to maintain such a good hope, even through grace! That is not, however, a valid excuse for not forming this habit of "looking unto Jesus," for sanctification. For, we do hope, to be with him and like him, at his coming. We never give up this hope altogether, for any length of time. We often forget it, but we cannot

forego it entirely. Our hearts would break, or our reason fail, if we had *no hope* of salvation. It is, therefore, a mere waste of time, if not something worse, to keep harping about the difficulty of hoping: for, however difficult or easy it may be, you *do* hope to reach heaven at last. You could not help doing so, if you were to try. I am quite aware that you have said at times, "There is no hope." Sometimes you have *seen* none: but even then you were *looking* for some; and thus hoping to find this hope of eternal life again.

But, a truce—to this reasoning. I must remonstrate. You have not given up all hope of heaven. You need not, you ought not: will you then *keep* hold of it, and yet take no such hold as shall have a holy influence upon you? True; you have added to your faith virtue: but will you add nothing more? Is *one* mark of grace enough to set all your fears at rest? Can you be satisfied with just keeping up the degree of piety you began with? What!—is that less than at first?

I am not upbraiding you. I know but too well, the treacherous tendencies of the heart; and how much the world, both by its snares and cares, can work upon these tendencies. My object is, therefore, to bring "the powers of the world to come," to bear more directly, and habitually, and sweetly, upon your hopes, and habits, and spirit. Again, therefore, I say, you quite mistake, if you still imagine that you could not keep Eternity in sight, without sadness or dread. Indeed, you have never fairly looked at it, as Jesus has illuminated it by the gospel, if you even suspect it could embitter or embarrass any life, which you can live with safety to your soul. The life which the prospect of eternal life can darken, is no *safe* life, whatever else it may be. I refer, however, to the prospect of eternal life, as the GOSPEL presents it to those who love the Saviour; and not to the form of gloom and terror, in which some of them view it. To many, the judgment-seat and eternity, are only objects of awful hazard and intimidation; furnishing nothing but *checks* now, and "peradventures" hereafter. Were this true, I should be as much afraid as any one, to look at the things which are unseen and eternal.

But just observe how PETER presents them to the followers of Christ. He does not hide nor soften the terrors of the last day: but still, he himself moves amidst the conflagration of the universe, with something of the calm majesty in which the eternal Spirit moved upon the face of the dark waters of chaos; and even leads the church along with him singing, as sweetly, amidst melting elements and burning worlds, "We look for new heavens and a new earth," as the angelic morning stars sang in the train of the Spirit at the creation.

Thus Peter describes "the day of God." 2 Pet. iii. 10. "The heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and pass away with a great noise; the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." And can this be seen or anticipated without consternation and alarm? Can any heart be strong or composed during this catastrophe? Yes; by the "NEVERTHELESS" of the divine promise, we may not only look, but also "*hasten*," in both thought and hope, "unto the coming of the day

of God :” for we are warranted to look for “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Neither the suddenness nor the solemnity of the end of all things, shall overwhelm the spirits, or shake the hopes, of the dead in Christ, when they awake at the trump of the archangel, amid the flaming torches, which, having illuminated the judgment-seat until the opened books are closed again, shall set on fire the whole course of nature. Even then, and “nevertheless” (not at all the less on account of “such things,”) shall the saints be able to possess their souls in peace, and fitted to admire and glorify their Saviour. “He shall be glorified in his saints, and admired of them that love him,” says Paul, “even when he comes with flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the gospel.” 2 Thess. i. 10.

Now, mark : it is in connection with this “hope of their calling,” that Paul prays for the Thessalonians that God would “count them worthy of this calling,” by fulfilling in them the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power ; that thus “Christ might be glorified in them” now as well as at his coming. In like manner, it is in connection with the sublime and soothing prospect of lifting up their heads with perfect composure amidst

“The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.”

that Peter urges upon all who “look for such things,” to be “diligent,” that they may be found by Christ, on that day, in peace, without spot and blameless.”

You see now how much faith the apostles had in the sanctifying power of eternal things. They commend, as well as enforce, the habit of looking at them as inspiring and constraining motives to holiness. How, then, can you be “holy in all manner of conversation and godliness,” if you neglect or dread to look at “such things?”

Meet this question fairly. You must look at something, in order to be able or willing to follow holiness. You have looked with some advantage, to not a few things already. You have looked to the law ; and said, “What manner of person ought I to be in all holy conversation and godliness :” and this consideration has done you good. You have looked at the gospel ; and said, “My life and conversation should be becoming the gospel of Christ, and adorn its doctrines :” and this has done you still more good. You have looked at the great Cloud of Witnesses, who through faith and patience now inherit the promises ; and said, “I must try to follow them as far as they followed Christ :” and this remembrance of the dead in Christ, has helped you on in the narrow way which leadeth to everlasting life. But still, all these things, holy as they are in their influence, and useful as you have found them, have not made you so like Christ as you wish to be, nor even as you need to be, in order to “make your calling and election sure.” No ; you yourself are not quite sure that you shall be “found of him in peace at his coming,” even when your hopes are brightest. “The full assurance of hope” is a plant of slow growth, and of great tenderness. Indeed, it never arrives at any thing like maturity, nor becomes an

evergreen in any heart, until the things which are unseen and eternal are “hoped for.” Heb. ii. 1. Now this they cannot be, unless they are *looked at by faith* : but just taking them for granted, or not forgetting them entirely, is not looking at them by faith. “Faith is the substance (or gives subsistence in the mind) to the things hoped for.” Accordingly, it was to believers as “looking for such things” as acquittals and crowns and glory, on the last day, that Peter said, “Seeing ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” It was to Christians, as anticipating and realizing the end of all earthly things, that he made the solemn appeal — “What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” And observe, in order to help them to answer this question, he urges them to *continue* “looking for, hastening (in thought and hope) unto the day of the Lord.” Thus Peter did not think that they could answer his question well, without a growing habit of considering the end of time and the full apocalypse of eternity ; a plain proof, by the way, that he had no fear of saddening or unsecularizing his converts by keeping the light of eternity around them.

Well ; you have said to yourself, whilst looking at the Cross, and to the mercy-seat, and to the sacrament, and to the moral law as the rule of life, — “What manner of person ought I to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” And all these “great sights” of privilege and duty, have “greatly helped” you to bring forth some of the first fruits of holiness unto the glory of God through Jesus Christ. And you will never “bring forth more fruit,” if you look away from these motives, or allow yourself to be drawn away by any thing that would displace them. Should you ever withdraw your eye from the cross or the mercy-seat, to fix it upon visions or novelties in religion, there will soon be an end to your present hope and holiness. You may even become such “manner of persons,” as those who listen to “tongues,” which teach no knowledge, or to interpreters of prophecy, who do nothing to fulfil the prophecies, which foretell the spread of the gospel. “But I hope better things of you ; even the things which accompany salvation, though I thus speak.”

Will you, then, in order to increase your hopes and holiness, try the experiment of looking distinctly at the solemn realities of eternity ; plying your heart and conscience with the solemn question, “What manner of person ought I to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?” Will you put it to yourself, just as God puts it to you ? It is not, you see, a bare or abstract question in morals. It embraces universal holiness of heart and life, and comes before you enshrined with the two-fold splendors of burning worlds and a bright eternity. Will you meet it, as you wish to meet the grand and awful consummation it is founded upon ? Do you hesitate ?

Why not look at such things now, since you must see them at last ? “Every eye shall see” the descending Judge, and the dissolving universe. You must see them, “for yourself and not for another.” And if you cannot bear to *think* of them, how will ye bear to *see* them—to *hear* them—to *feel* them, when neither rocks nor mountains, if they could fall upon you, would be able to hide

from you the scenes of that day? But, perhaps, you are afraid to hope so freely, as I commend, or as you wish? Why?

"The hope set before us" in the gospel, like the Shekinah of the divine presence which went before the church in the wilderness, is "a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night;" neither so dim as to be indistinct, nor so bright as to be dazzling to the eye. It is, indeed, as full of immortality as the sun is full of light; but as the sun shines through an atmosphere which softens his rays, and occasionally shades them too, so the hope of eternal life takes so many of the sweetest forms of social life, and is so surrounded by the duties and trials of public, domestic, and mortal life, that it never shines too brightly to be looked at, nor too darkly to be seen. It is emphatically a hope set before us: not so far off as to strain the eye in looking for it, nor so near as to pain the eye in looking at it.

And then, how effectually it is set before us!—The pillar of cloud and fire came down from heaven into the wilderness, unexplained and unheralded. Neither angel nor prophet foretold its descent from the throne, nor its continuance on the footstool. It was set before the church, with only its own light and shade to commend it. Revelation did not define its nature, nor the covenant ratify its duration, nor the harps of glory celebrate its worth. It came into the world unsung, and departed from the world unmissed. Not thus is the hope of eternal life set before us. "The bringing in of that better hope," was not in silence, nor in darkness. It was brought into the world with the full chorus of all worlds. The hope of the world, like the creation of the world, was welcomed by the morning stars singing together, and by all the angelic sons of God shouting for joy. The Lord Jesus Christ is the hope of glory: and when God brought "the only begotten into the world," he said, and let all the angels of God worship him." All the patriarchs of God had typified him—all the prophets of God had foretold him—all the oracles of God had described him—all the covenants of God had guaranteed him—all the providences of God had accredited him as the hope of the world; and, to crown this attestation of his character and errand, all the armies of God sang at his advent, "Peace on earth, and goodwill towards men!"

Thus the hope of eternal life is set before us in the person and sacrifice of him, upon whom God has visibly set all the seals and tokens of the eternal power and Godhead: and by the ministry and miracles of men who could not be deceived, and of angels who could not mistake. Nor is the benefit of hoping in Christ set before us less clearly or less impressively, than the fact that he is the only hope set before us. The concurrent testimony of all ages, is, that "hope in him maketh not ashamed." The throne of heaven is already thronged with proofs of this. Even on earth, none have been put to shame before men, by the influence of a good hope through grace, when that hope laid hold upon the glory which grace leads to. "Every man who hath this hope in Christ purifieth himself even as he is pure?" The heartless hope of a death-bed conversion, or the half-hearted hope of just escaping hell in some way at

last, may not sanctify the character at all. Such *hoppers* will have occasion to be ashamed before God and man, whether they own it or not now: and the shame will become "confusion of face," as well as of spirit, when they are about to exchange worlds.

I would have you hope enough—to make you happy in your mind, and holy in your character.—For, what is the use of hoping too little, to produce this very desirable and necessary effect? It cannot be produced at all without hope; and there will never be much holiness or happiness from poor hopes. They will either produce *poor spirits* or *poorer virtues*. She who has not hope enough in Christ, to keep her spirits from despondency, will not do nor attempt much for the honor of Christ; and she who can *enjoy herself* without settled hopes of salvation, will content herself with still less.

This subject requires to be looked into with much impartiality, and with no small degree of holy jealousy. Now it is quite as possible for you to hope too little, as for the hypocrite to hope too much. "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish" because he is a hypocrite; and just because you are *not* a hypocrite, your spirits may sink, or your character not rise at all in strength and beauty. This is no paradox, whatever it may seem at first sight. There is sure to be much depression, or but little diligence, wherever there is "no guile," and but little hope. And for this obvious reason. A guileless mind deals so honestly with itself, that nothing can counterbalance its self-condemnation and fear, but a full apprehension of the sufficiency and freeness of the Saviour's grace; and, therefore, the very fidelity of the conscience must paralyze the heart or the hands in the service of God, if the riches of that grace are not clearly seen to be equally adapted and designed to meet the case. Thus there cannot be good spirits without a good hope through grace, wherever the conscience is faithful or tender; nor will such a conscience purify the character much, whilst it derives no peace from the blood of the Lamb. It must be somewhat pacified by the Cross of Christ, before it can delight in copying the example of Christ.

Consider this. It is not with you now as it once was, nor as it still is with the self-righteous, that the abandonment of a wrong habit, or the commencement of a new duty, can create the hope of salvation. You know the way of salvation too well, to imagine that you can make your peace with God, by laying down sins, or by taking up mere moral duties. You see and feel, indeed, the necessity of doing both; but you see and feel equally, that you cannot be *justified* by the works of the law, whatever good they might do you in other respects. They are not the price of an interest in Christ, nor the direct way of finding an interest in him; and without *that*, you know that they will be of no avail. Thus mere duty must ever seem to you now useless labor, until you can work from love and gratitude to the Saviour.—Well, thus you never will work, until you venture to *hope*, "that by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ you shall be saved." *Waiting* for the coming of this good hope, like working for it, will not bring it. You must just "lay hold upon the hope set before you in the gospel," or live in suspense,

and thus in indecision too ; for character will not settle nor rise, whilst hope is unsettled.

I do not forget, in saying this, that there are some very lovely characters, who *say* that they have little or no hope. They have, however, more than they imagine. I do not mean that they say one thing and think another : but that they mean by hope, much more than hope itself means.

Hence, in speaking of their own case they use language which, however familiar, misleads themselves and others : "I cannot *see* my interest in Christ ; cannot *see* my title to the promises ; cannot *see* my election or my calling." Now it would not be altogether unfair nor unkind, to bring down upon such complaints the apostolic remonstrance, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." This refers, indeed, not so much to our hoping in Christ for mercy and grace now, as to the things hoped for when the whole creation, in common with the church, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Rom. viii. 21—25. Still it is true, that hope, like faith, is not "sight," nor necessarily "assurance," and, therefore, it does not follow that an humble, devout, and exemplary woman has no hope, because she says, "I cannot *see* my interest in Christ or the promises." In speaking thus, she is not thinking of what the gospel warrants her to hope for ; but either of what she wishes for, or what she once enjoyed.

This is not a distinction without a difference. It is by far too common to confound hope with rapturous ecstasy, or with perfect peace, or with spiritual and heavenly mindedness : and when these delicious feelings subside, to say,—that hope is lost. It would hardly be more unwise to say, that *reason* is lost. Reason had as much connection with these feelings, whilst they lasted, as hope : but, who suspects that reason is fled, when rapture or holy calm is gone ? Neither reason nor hope is intended to keep up high emotion for ever.

Thus we ought to be very careful how we speak and think about the hope of salvation. It is, remember, a *sinner's* hope,—a *penitent's* hope—a *pilgrim's* hope : and, therefore, it must not be expected nor desired in such a degree, as would banish all painful feelings. We are fully warranted, and quite welcome, to hope in Christ for present grace and future glory : but we are not warranted to expect such grace as would leave nothing in our nature to humble us ; nor such foretastes of heaven, as would render us insensible to trials or temptations on earth. We may be really happy, notwithstanding outward trials, and inward struggles ; but the perfect happiness of being without any of them, does not belong to time ; it is the bliss of eternity.

I am not contradicting nor forgetting myself, by thus guarding you against hoping for too much. I repeat, with more confidence than ever, that you are not hoping enough in Christ, if you are *unhappy* in your mind, when you think of judgment or eternity. You have too little hope, if either your spirits sink, or your efforts relax, in following holiness. I must go still further, and say, it is not exactly the *sinner's* hope, nor the

penitent's hope, nor the pilgrim's hope, that you are thinking about, if you say that you can get but little hope from the gospel. What would you *have*, that the glorious gospel does not promise ? Depend upon it, you are seeking some *unpromised* form of the hope of salvation, or some *disproportionate* degree of that good hope, if you find it almost impossible to hope for your own salvation. It would be utterly impossible for you to despair or despond, if you wanted nothing but what is promised.

Be not offended nor surprised, if I suspect you of wanting more. I do so, because I think favorably, upon the whole, of your motives and spirit, in attaching a very *high* meaning to Christian hope. This is far wiser than taking low views of it. You are, indeed, quite right in feeling quite sure, that there should be a very great difference between natural hope and spiritual hope. That kind of hope which you could keep up without much difficulty, whilst you were careless or formal, ought not to satisfy you, now that you know the evil of sin, and the infinite value of the soul and salvation. That "great salvation" deserves and requires a "good hope," in more senses than the goodness of either its practical influence or its humble spirit : it ought also to be grateful and joyful. Well ; it may be both, without being all that you mean by "a good hope through grace."

Let me explain myself freely on this point. We are very prone to fix the meaning of hope from our first taste of the *joy* of salvation. But this, however well meant, is unwise. It is unwarranted. This is *more* than hope, in the relief which is usually obtained from the first sight of the glory and grace of the Saviour. The Holy Spirit often renders that discovery of the cross so cheering, or so charming, that the whole soul is absorbed and transported with it. We can think of nothing else. We can wish for nothing more. It is heaven on earth. We could take an eternity of it.

"That holy calm within the breast,
Seems the dear pledge of heavenly rest."

But although this be hope, it is also much more than hope. It is that joy of salvation, by which God revives and wins the heart of the contrite ones. It is that manifestation of Himself, by which he proves to us that he "giveth grace to the humble." It is that "demonstration of the Spirit," which places beyond all doubt, both the reality and the blessedness of vital godliness. In a word ; it is the strong consolation of a dying *saint*, given to a sinking *penitent*, that she may know and never forget the worth of Christ.

Now we ought to be very thankful for this timely and complete discovery of the all-sufficiency of the atoning sacrifice. It is a fine security, for ever after, against false doctrine and superficial experience. It is not, however, a security against *practical* error. Accordingly, one of two errors is often fallen into, when this high state of enjoyment falls away. It does subside : and then, we either count nothing hope, which does not come up to it ; or we do no more in religion, than just enough to be somewhat in the way, or

not exactly *out* of the way, of finding it again. And thus it is, that some sink into despondency, and others into heartless formality. One becomes sad, and another inconsistent : and both from the same cause,—they cannot hope as they *once* did. The hope (as they call it) which first cheered the spirits of the one, and inspired the diligence of the other is gone : and because they cannot get it back, they both *go* back ; the one into the region of doubts and fears, and the other into the region of declension.

Now, which of these states are you in ? Which ever it be, there is but one remedy. You must regard something else as the hope of salvation, than a return of the precise kind and degree of joy which you first called hope. I do not say, that that joy will never revisit your spirit. I do not think (as Sheshbazzar would have said) that the candle of the Lord will never shine upon you again, as it did when it was first lighted. But I do both say and think, that it will not do so, whilst you are merely *waiting* for it. You must be humble enough to begin with the sinner's hope, and to go on with the pilgrim's hope, if you would be happy in your own mind again. And, why not be thus humble and content ? What right has any one to make *terms* with God, for faith or obedience ?

Just look at such conduct in two cases. What would you think of a woman who could say in words,—“I have not that comfort in religion, which I had at one time ; and, therefore, I have neither heart nor motive to be very devotional in my closet, or very exemplary in my family, or very liberal to the cause of God, or very much attached to the means of grace ? I was all this, whilst my comfort lasted : but, as that is gone, it would be a kind of *hypocrisy* on my part now, were I to do all that I used to do, just as if nothing had happened to discourage or disconcert me. I know very well, that I am not doing right at present : but I know too, that I am quite willing to return to my ‘first love,’ and to my ‘first works’ too, whenever God returns my first hopes to me. He has only to shine and smile upon my soul as in the days of old, in order to my becoming again all that I *was* in the days of old. This, I am waiting for ; and I hope it will come in course of time. Accordingly, I do not go altogether out of the way of meeting with it. I do not pray much in secret, certainly : but I still keep under a faithful ministry, and keep up my connections with the church and sacraments of Christ. This, indeed, is my chief reason for hoping at all : for if God do not meet with my soul again there, I am not likely to find him again at home. I have no heart to seek him at home now ; but, could I only get such another strong impulse from the sanctuary, as that which first sent me to my closet and my Bible, I make no doubt but I should go on again as well as ever. And, is not this new impulse likely to come ? Surely, my soul will not be ‘required’ of me, whilst it is in this unprepared state, nor before God has healed my backsliding ! If it should be required of me ‘this night’—or this year—what — ?”

What would you say to a case like this ? Sheshbazzar would have said at once, and that in his

most solemn and tender manner, “Take the *sinner's* hope : for as a backsliding *child*, no line of the ‘scarlet thread’ of adoption will save you, like Rahab, now that the ark of the covenant is sounding its ram’s horns around your walls.” I say, in plainer terms, “‘The hope set before you in the gospel,’ may well suffice you. It would ill become you to stand out or stipulate with God for your first joy. He deserves your ‘first love,’ and your ‘first works’ too, for the hope still before you in the gospel. And it is this, ‘Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ This is hope enough to make any one happy, who believes it : yes, and holy too : for what could bind you to follow holiness, if the assuring promise of salvation, from the lips of a God who cannot lie, do not ?

“Do you dislike to have your hope of salvation thus thrown upon the *eventual* answer of earnest prayer ? If so, you are not humble enough yet, to welcome salvation by grace alone. You will, however, be glad to do so, when you know yourself more intimately.” Thus I should address such a woman, who was still “prefessing godliness,” and yet unwilling to take up hope by prayer.

Look now at another case. There is a woman, not worldly minded ; not exactly averse to devotion or diligence ; and not at all wishing for any assurance of hope or faith, which would be a pillow to sloth or inconsistency. But she has lost all her hope ; as she calls her *first* enjoyment at the cross and the mercy-seat. She can neither glow nor melt, think nor feel, there, as she once did : and just because she cannot, she says, that she cannot see one ray of hope for herself. The fact is, she means by a ray of hope, a beam, if not a burst, of that joy which shone upon her soul, when she was first enabled to commit her soul into the hands of Christ : or she wants a degree of hope which would put down at once all the plagues of her heart ; and keep out all temptation and vain thoughts ; and make all duty delightful, and all trials easy. She says, indeed, that she would be thankful for a single and the slightest ray of hope. But, tell her that God is *sure* to answer her cry for mercy ; and that, although a fixed day-star of hope does not cheer her. It is not that *form* of hope which cheered her formally. It does not warm or melt her heart at a glance, as her first believing views of the Lamb slain did. She is also too agitated, or too depressed, to grasp with her understanding, the sublime fact, that God’s command, “Call on me,” is God’s command to *hope* in him. He means “hope,” when he says, “Pray ;” he means, “Pray,” whenever he says, “hope.” But the very simplicity of this way of setting hope before us, seems *mystery*, if not mockery, to a sad spirit, when sadness has been long indulged. “Would not God show some ‘token for good’ at once, (it is said) if he intended to be gracious ? But he sealeth up even the stars !” Yes ; but just that the desponding may look at the sun. It is not breaking a “bruised reed,” to say so. She will never hope, who does not see that the command to *pray*, is a sun “shining in its strength.” How truly Paul says, “We are saved by hope !”

ALLEGORY. No. III.

RACHEL'S CURE.

WHEN they arrived at the tent in the wilderness, Esrom spread the skin of the young lion, which had perished in the swellings of Jordan, for a couch to Sheshbazzar. The patriarch said, as he sat down upon it, "An *old* lion would not have rushed over the precipice after his prey, when the Jordan had overflowed all its banks. He would have couched when he heard the roar of the waters; or hunted in another direction, until they had subsided. ESROM! you have often pursued your speculations into the swellings of a river, which, like the Jordan, discharges itself into the DEAD SEA. It is of the Lord's mercies, that you were not swept by the wild waves of conjecture, into the dark Asphaltic of idolatry. You may well say with David, of the God of your fathers,—"He sent from above, he took me—he drew me out of many waters." But for this, 'the proud waves' of Philistia, Egypt, or Babylon, had '*come into thy soul*:' for all their billows went over thee, and even their water-spouts had thee often under their wings. You despised idols; but you worshipped the powers of nature, and all but consulted the powers of darkness. You would have divined with the cup of Pharaoh, or stipulated with the witch of Endor, for the secrets of the future; and for the secrets of the invisible, you would have questioned, alternately, the oracles of Babylon, the graves of the dead, or the stars of heaven."

Such had been the character of Esrom, until the master-spirit of Sheshbazzar, and the meek spirit of Rachel, threw their joint spell over his prying curiosity. Even then, he bowed his *head* only, to Judaism. His understanding yielded to the arguments of the patriarch, and his heart to the influence of the virgin of Beersheba: but upon his spirit, the truth, not the *grace* of Judaism, had all the power. It was the logic of the system, not the *mercy* of the dispensation, that affected him. Its external evidence was a hook in his jaws; but its internal glory, as the only hope of a sinner, had no charms for him. The rays of that glory fell upon the scales of his self-righteousness, as the winds of heaven on the scales of Leviathan, and the bones of Behemoth, unfelt; "one was so near to another, that no air could come between them." Job xli. He had bowed at the side of Sheshbazzar, amidst the thousands of Israel, when the high-priest went within the veil with the interceding atonement; but, although the veil of the temple *shook* with the intensity of their emotion, Esrom's heart neither beat with suspense before, nor burned with gratitude after, the answer of peace came from the mercy-seat. "The system must be true; and therefore it ought to be respected,"—was the whole amount of his worship. "Its miracles counterbalance its mysteries,"—was his only reason for believing. The eyes of his understanding, like the eyelids of the morning, opened without fear; and his hopes, like the wings of the morning, expanded without effort; whether he thought of life or death, time or eternity. He was too rich, to feel dependent on Providence; and too

proud to be a debtor to grace. He took for granted, that the *little* mercy he needed (for, how could it be *much*, after all his morals?) must, as a matter of course, be quite sure. For, what had he ever done, that his soul should be in any danger? He had, indeed, been rather *free* in his inquiries: but then, *truth* was his object! Thus Esrom reasoned; and thus he *felt* too. He had not borne "the yoke in his youth." Like Moab, he had "been at ease, from his youth;" and thus, his conscience had never been confronted with the terrors of the law or eternity. Nothing had ever disturbed his self-complacency, until Rachel's penitence, on hearing the parable of the grapes of Gomorrah, compelled him to pause and ask himself,—"*If Rachel weep, can I be right, or altogether safe?*" Her spirit is both purer and humbler than my spirit: and yet she trembles before God! Is this wisdom or weakness, on her part? Weakness! Who ever saw Rachel *weak*? Her spirit has towered in strength and majesty, ever since its roots, like the cedars of Lebanon, 'dipped their feet in the oil' of the olive valley. Can I be safe—if she was in danger until then?" This question went to his *heart*: and whilst it lodged there, Rachel was won, and Sheshbazzar conciliated, and Esrom himself somewhat humbled. Still, his "eye was not single." It caught occasional glimpses of the genius of Judaism, as the religion of a sinner, and as the shadow of good things to come; but it never looked steadfastly to the substance of the system, nor to the simplicity of his own motives. He became a great "doer of the law," just that he might be a less *debtor* to the covenant. He threw the whole weight of his influence into the synagogue; but chiefly, that he might conciliate the elders to Rachel. He beautified the building, and placed new copies of the law upon the desk; but not until he found out that Rachel was preparing splendid hangings, of her own needle-work, for the tabernacle. He often led the choir, when the great HOSANNA was sung, if Rachel was present: but when she was not there, his voice was sure to be *out of tune*, owing (as he said) to his being out too early amongst his reapers, or too late amongst his sheep-folds, in a day of rain. Thus his eye was not single, even when his hand was most active and liberal.

Rachel was the first to discover his *mixed* motives, and not slow to arraign them. With equal promptness and point, she asked him, when his mantle of "*flax and wool*," would be ready to wear before the Lord in Zion? and, why he did not offer "*swine's blood*," as well as the firstlings of his flock, at the altar? Her parable, as she applied it, told upon his conscience, as "The Grapes of Gomorrah" did upon her own. He was shocked by the discovery of his mixed motives; and, from that time, began to pray, "Unite my heart to fear Thy name." The impiety of serving the CREATOR for the sake of the *creature*, unveiled to him all the ungodliness of his spirit; and made him smite upon his breast, in all the bitterness of self-condemnation. Sheshbazzar had marked this revolution, and resolved to train Esrom for the ELDERSHIP of Beersheba; and as his own successor in the guidance of the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. For this he had often "wrestled

until the break of day," with the angel of the covenant. For this, he had long watched and prayed daily. It was to this he referred, when he said to Esrom, in the wilderness, "*But for your sake Rachel would not have been restored.*"

He repeated this in the tent; and added, "The Shepherd of Israel intends thee to feed his sheep and lambs, and therefore he will spare the help, 'meet for' thee. Thou art not fit to be trusted *alone* yet, with such a charge. Thou couldst not be calculated upon for prudence or fidelity, if thy betrothed were taken away at this time. It is not, therefore, for thy merit she is spared; but in pity to thy weakness, and in consideration of the work thou art called unto. Give thy heart to that work, from henceforth; and thus render unnecessary such visitations as I incurred. God had to write me '*childless*,' and then '*widower*' before I gave all my heart to his glory. He had to make '*my soul forget prosperity*,' before I would identify my interests with his cause, or seek my happiness in 'the good of his heritage.'"

Then, turning to Rachel, who sat leaning her head upon the ark of her covenants, the old man said, "Rachel, I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but I have studied the past, and thus can anticipate the future, in some of its certain wants. It will always want Sarahs for its Abrahams, Rachels for its Jacobs, and Deborahs for its Lapidoths. Whilst SAMUELS are wanted at the altar of the Lord, there must be *Hannahs* in Ramathaimzophim. Even whilst SAMSONS are needed in Israel, there must be *Mothers in Israel*, like the wife of Manoah: and all such wives and mothers must 'bear the yoke in their youth.' God has laid his heaviest yoke on thy young neck; and thou has not been, 'as a bullock unaccustomed' to it, impatient, or obstinate. Ye can both say, 'our hearts are not turned back, though Thou, O God, hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.' Ye have both gone astray like lost sheep; but ye both returned to the shepherd of Israel, the moment he employed his guardian crook as a chastising rod; and now, it is over you as a pastoral crook again, and will soon guide you back in peace, to all the green pastures and still waters of Zion. This leprosy will give place to health in thy countenance; and this lowliness of spirits, to the joy of salvation. But, my children! let the dawn of this hope, as it brightens unto perfect day, bring all your *responsibilities*, as well as your prospects, distinctly before you. You are about to be blessed again, that, like Abraham and Sarah, ye may be 'a blessing,' in your house and neighborhood. Know therefore, and remember, that if ye dare to 'live unto yourselves' again, 'a worse thing will befall you.'"

There was no occasion to prolong the conversation. Rachel's leprosy was rapidly passing away. The composure and tenderness of Sheshbazzar, had created a crisis in her spirits, which led on her health, as if Lot's angel had taken her by the hand, and whispered a message of peace from the throne, in tones and terms of heavenly sympathy; for Sheshbazzar closed the evening with prayer. And, what a prayer! Never, since Jacob wrestled with the angel on Peniel, had such petitions been poured from the heart, or pressed into heaven.

"Whilst he was yet speaking," Rachel was recovering.

NO. IV.

VARIETIES, FROM INATTENTION.

Too much importance cannot be attached to a right creed, except when it is put in the room of a holy character, or of an humble spirit. Then, however, there is something equally awful and ominous in orthodoxy. Not that a sound creed itself is a dangerous thing. Far from it! Indeed, there can be no true holiness nor humility, without soundness in the faith, upon all *cardinal* points. There may be virtues of character, which are intended for holiness: and virtues of temper, which are intended for humility: but, as both holiness and humility have their chief reasons in the revealed character and will of God, the conduct and spirit (however good) which are not chiefly influenced by these reasons, are not those virtues.—She who goes no further than the general principle—"I ought to be holy because God is holy; and humble because God is great," is certainly wiser than the woman who merely avoids vice and pride because they are vulgar: but still, the former is almost as far from being "wise unto salvation," as the latter. She assigns, indeed, a much better reason than the latter for her conduct and spirit: for it is a scriptural reason. That, however, is not enough, so long as it is her *only* reason. God has laid down other reasons than his own holiness, why we should be holy; and other reasons than his own greatness, why we should be humble. He enforces these graces of character, by the purifying virtue and design of the blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and by the sublime perfection of heavenly bliss. Now, although all these reasons may be resolved into the glorious holiness of God, as their original fountain, or moral cause, it is certainly not as such, that she sees the matter, who is less influenced by the love of Christ, than by the law of duty. ANGELS only are able to be holy, "because God is holy." She is, therefore, both heedless and heartless in religion, who satisfies herself with this single motive. Alas, all the motives and reasons furnished by all the wonders of redeeming love, produce but too little holiness, even in those who admire them most; that morality, therefore, which can subsist without them, must be very meagre indeed.

It is, however, a very solemn and startling fact, that, in some things, the character and spirit of females, who act only from a strong sense of propriety, or upon a vague principle of duty, surpass those of some women who profess "godliness," upon evangelical principles. "This is a sore evil under the sun!" It proves that there is a way of believing "in vain," or of "holding the truth" without the love of it: a state of mind and conscience, of all others the most ruinous! For, if the glorious gospel is believed, without being obeyed, one of two things is certain: either that the person is verging towards a reprobate mind, or that she was never renewed at all in the spirit

of her mind. The latter is, indeed, the more likely supposition; for "a reprobate mind," or abandonment to judicial hardness of the heart, is a curse but rarely incurred by "women professing godliness." Those of them who are very inconsistent, may be safely regarded as unconverted.—Still, it is a very awful thing, when a woman can give herself credit for being converted to God by the Holy Spirit, whilst all her religion consists in *talking* about religion. Unregeneracy is dreadful, even in a woman who is utterly ignorant of the great truths of the gospel of salvation: but it is absolutely horrible, when found in connection with the knowledge and acknowledgment of these supreme truths. The very devils tremble at what they believe. The man or woman, therefore, who can believe all that is peculiar, inspiring, and solemn in the gospel, and yet not obey that gospel, is less affected by it than even Satan and his angels. They, indeed, hate it with perfect hatred; but still they stand in awe of it, and yield to it the homage of fear. How infatuated then must she be, whose religion begins and ends with hearing and talking of "the truth as it is in Jesus!" That truth is intended to rule both the tongue and the temper; to subdue the love of the world, and the love of ease; to turn sloth into activity, and selfishness into cheerful benevolence; and thus to make all whom it blesses, "a blessing" to others, to the full extent of their ability.

I want, by these hints, to make you as much afraid of not following the Lord fully, as you are of denying the Lord who bought you; as much shocked at partial obedience and heartless devotion, as at open infidelity. Now, you would not for worlds be sceptics nor scorners. Rather than apostatise from the truth as it is in Jesus, or than hold it in unrighteousness, you would do, give, and pray more than ever you have tried hitherto.—Yes; were you quite sure, or even very suspicious, that the degree in which you are now following God in duty and devotion, was no security against final apostacy, and no conclusive proof of saving piety, you would bestir yourself at once, and make a new effort to act up to your avowed principles.

Are you, then, quite sure that you have gone further in the narrow way, than "those who draw back unto perdition?" Is it beyond all doubt that you are following the Lord far enough, to prove that you have been "drawn by the cords of Love," and "led by the Spirit?" I do not at all question your sincerity, nor the correctness of your principles, so far as you do follow the Lord. My inquiry is, are *you* fully persuaded in your own mind, that you are diligent enough to "make your calling and election sure?" Does your own conscience bear you witness, that you are doing all those things, of which God saith, if ye do them, "ye shall never fall!" Do read again the list of these essential things. 2 Peter i. 5—11. What; is it enough for you, that you remember the outline of the passage I have thus noted? Do, then, remember that clause of it, (changing the pronoun,) *she* "that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that she was purged from her old sins." If you have any pretensions to sincerity, you will read again, now, the list itself; "Add to your faith virtue; (that is,

courage to avow and evince your faith;) and to courage, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: But (she) that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that (she) was purged from (her) old sins. Wherefore the rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

Now whatever else you fear or feel on reading this very solemn and heart-searching oracle, you are deeply conscious of, and concerned about one thing;—that you may "*never fall*." That has fixed your eye, and affected your heart. You cannot bear the idea of falling away from God entirely and finally. You may not be so fascinated by the prospect of "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," as for the sake of *that*, to add "all these things to your faith." You may even be so heartless about heaven, as to care little how you enter it, if you are only admitted at last: but you are not so lost to all right feeling, as to care nothing about missing that kingdom, or falling short of it. Well? make the *most* of this feeling, if it thus be the best and the strongest of your present religious emotions. It is a good feeling in itself; and, accordingly, the fear of falling away is often appealed to in the Scriptures. Rom. xi. 17, 22.

You do, then, fear apostacy. You are neither so "high-minded," nor so earthly-minded, as not to fear falling: nor so "double-minded" as to pretend to be fearless. Well; so far, you are not "blind," even if you "lack" some of those things which constitute the security against falling. You do not, however, "see afar off," (are not *long-sighted*—do not look without *winking*) if you imagine that you can safely *continue* to lack any of these things. Each of them is an essential feature of that "Divine nature" or holiness, without which you cannot see the Lord. It is by having them all in you, so as to "abound" in them, that "calling and election are made sure," and "never falling" certain.

Are you beginning to tire of this process of reasoning and remonstrance? It is not mine, remember! Alas, I feel it, like yourself, to be very strict, and even somewhat stern too. Again and again I have been tempted to shut my eyes upon some of the many things, thus inseparably linked together, and then laid altogether upon me, as necessary to keep me from falling. I have caught myself asking, "Cannot calling and election too be made sure, without adding so many things to faith?" Can I not "stand" at less expense of time, thought, and effort? Who gives all this diligence, to make sure against falling! Do all fall, who "lack" any of these things? Have I not stood for years, although I have not abounded much in some of these virtues? Do I not see around me not a few, who are doing even less to stand than myself, and yet not at all afraid of falling, nor thought to be in any danger of it?"

Thus there are moments of temptation, and

moods of temper, when one could almost fly into a passion, as well as get impatient, with the strait meshes of Peter's net. These tossings and twistings are not made, indeed, in order to escape from the fisherman's net altogether. We do not want the liberty of those fishes which keep out of the gospel-net, nor of those "bad" ones which are sure to be "cast away," when it is drawn to the shores of eternity: but we are, alas, prone to take more liberty than God sanctions.

How is this to be cured? It is a bad, yea, a dangerous disposition. Do not, however, make it worse than it really is. I mean,—do not conclude that all is wrong in your heart, because all is not yet right. Look not so exclusively upon the things which you lack, as to overlook entirely the things which you love in religion. You have no objection to do some of the things which are thus insisted upon, as securities against falling. Nay, there is not one of them you would throw out of the list, or set aside altogether. Consider: you would not "add to your faith, vice; nor to your virtue, ignorance; nor to your knowledge, intemperance; nor to your temperance, impatience; nor to your patience, ungodliness; nor to your godliness, unsisterly harshness; nor to your kindness, uncharitableness." The very idea of this change revolts you! You would not for worlds reverse the laws of holiness in this way. The exclamation, "What fellowship hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?" rushes from your heart to your lips, the moment you glance at the glaring inconsistency.

There it is! I knew how the scale would turn, when you were fairly dealt with. It is not *immoral* freedom, that there is a craving for in your heart. You do not want a vice in the room of a virtue. Even the virtue you lack most, you do not exactly dislike. It is the trouble of *cultivating* it, that is the chief hardship to you. If virtue would grow out of faith, or knowledge out of virtue, or patience out of temperance, or godliness out of patience, or charity out of godliness, without any effort or care on your part, you would have but little objection to any of them. You would even be delighted to "abound" in them all, if they would only come and abide, of their own accord. For, you see no beauty in impatience, no attraction in anger, no loveliness in caprice or peevishness, and no benefit in your besetting sin. You would be very glad, if all that is wrong in your temper and conduct would go away at once and for ever.

Thus we begin to get at the *secret* of our reluctance to some duties, and of our failure in some graces: they require more diligence than we like to bestow upon them. If the fruits of the spirit would only grow and ripen as easily as the weeds of nature spring up and prevail, we should be quite pleased to bear a plentiful harvest of good fruit to the glory of God: but, finding that they are neither of spontaneous growth, nor of independent vitality: and that we must "*sow* unto the spirit," if we would reap of the spirit, we yield to sloth, or invent excuses for barrenness.

Here, then, is the point at which you must make a deliberate and solemn stand for your own safety, by giving all diligence to add to your faith, that virtue of character, or that grace of temper, which

you lack most. You know well *what* it is. You have found by experience that it does not come of itself. You feel that the absence of it, throws doubt and darkness upon both your calling and election. You see how its continued absence must continue your suspense, and embitter, if not utterly darken, your dying moments. Will you not then make a determined stand, in order to add that to your faith, the want of which, not only weakens your faith, but also keeps you in doubt of its sincerity? O, leave it to the blind and the base to juggle on this matter, with the *dice-box* of presumptive election. You are not "sure" of your election of God, and never can be, whilst you make no resolute effort to crucify your besetting sin, or take no pains to acquire the fruits of the spirit, which you lack most.

Do consider also, that it is really much easier to *excel* in the very thing you fail in most, than it is to repair, from Sabbath to Sabbath, the injury which that failure is for ever inflicting upon what is good about your character and spirit. Why; one half of the time, thought, and prayer which you must give, in order to get over the doubts and distress created by your besetting sin, would put an end to that sin. You do not escape from care or labor, by leaving your chief fault to go on in its own way. The *Sacrament* comes round, and then you have to meet all the sad consequences of it there, or to pray them down by strong cries and tears in your closet. *Affliction* comes, and then you have to suffer under the painful consciousness that God is contending with you on account of that sin. Darkness and depression come, and then you find that it is the heaviest weight upon your spirits, and the eclipsing cloud upon your prospects. Thus you do any thing but save time or escape labor, by allowing your chief defect to prevail from year to year. The *running* account of its consequences must be settled, whenever the bills become heavy; and then they are not easily met, as you well know, and have often felt.

Another fact deserves your special attention; nothing vital or good in your principles or experience will go wrong, by concentrating and confining your care, for a time, to the acquirement of the one grace you lack most. No other fruit of the spirit will fall off from the branches of your profession, or cease to ripen, whilst you are giving all your diligence to add to them a fruit they have never borne yet. God will take care that the hope you derive from the cross, and the peace you obtain from the promises, and the help you get from ordinances, shall not stop nor diminish, whilst you are giving all your attention to set that right in your character, which you know to be wrong, and which he has often contended against. Nay; he will add to his care of the general interests of your soul, whilst you are adding to your faith that fruit, the want of which injures you, and dishonors him. Remember; you were no loser, when you began to follow Christ, by the pains you took to remedy what was worst in your case then: and depend on it, you will lose nothing by taking the same course with what is worse now. No one ever went *back* in Christian experience or comfort, by a *set* effort to get forward in a neglected line of Christian character or temper.

These considerations cannot fail to have much

weight with you. They are too solemn to be trifled with, and too just to be disputed. No admission of their truth, however, will answer any good purpose, unless they both reconcile and determine you to war and watch against your besetting sin. Nothing is gained by this heart-searching, yet, if your heart still rise against a *diligent* cultivation of that fruit of the Spirit, which you lack most. You may feel ashamed; you may be very sorry; you may even condemn yourself very bitterly for your past neglect, and earnestly wish that what is wrong would "take wings and flee away:" but all this will not mend the matter. You may try a thousand plans to get clear of it; but it will cleave to you, until you are humble enough and honest enough, to take the Saviour's plan—"cut it off, and cast it from thee." No besetting sin, no darling idol, was ever overthrown, until this rough handling was applied to it. "This kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting."

Do these remonstrances seem to you at all legal, or too rigid? Would you be more pleased to be plied only with motives drawn from the love of Christ, and from the hope of salvation, and from the holy designs of free grace? You and I too have great need to be very careful how we speak upon this subject. Neither cutting off, nor casting away, what is wrong, will be of any saving benefit, if not influenced by these saving truths. Indeed, the crucifixion of the lusts of the flesh, or of the mind, will not be willingly attempted nor long continued by any one, who is not glorying only in the cross of Christ. But then—if our glorying in the cross alone has not crucified us to the world in certain things, which we know to be wrong, how are we to get rid of them? Are they to be left standing out against law and conscience, because they do not yield to love or hope? May a bad temper or habit safely remain unsanctified, because a good hope through grace has not conquered it? True; nothing but more grace will ever conquer it effectually; but, letting it alone in the meantime, is certainly not the way of obtaining more grace. God "giveth grace to the humble," and she is not very humble, who will not employ fears as well as hopes, and threatenings as well as promises, in order to promote her sanctification.

But do not take my opinion on this subject. Look again at Peter's argument. He gives the first place to the holy influence of the promises, upon the sanctification of believers. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises—that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature." Thus the apostle had no idea of any real sanctification, apart from the sweet influence of the sweetest consolations. But then, he immediately says, "BESIDE THIS, give all diligence to add to your faith, virtue," &c. &c. Thus there are things to do, as well as promises to believe, in order to the acquirement of a holy character. He even *warns* as well as *woos* believers to give all diligence.

How finely this agrees with both the letter and the spirit of the Saviour's counsels to his disciples. He warned them not only by the fear of falling, but also by the fear of hell-fire. Even in his great intercessory prayer for their sanctification, he did not say, "Sanctify them by thy promises;"

nor did he say, "Sanctify them by thy threatenings;" but "by thy TRUTH: thy word is truth." Thus all truth, consolatory and conservative, cheering and checking, belongs to the means of sanctification. Accordingly, the great promise of the Holy Spirit, as the Sanctifier, is, "he shall lead you into all truth."

There is still another preservative against falling, which I must bring under your notice, and which you must lay to heart, if you would not fall. It is just as necessary that you should "take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand," as that you should add to your faith, the virtues and graces we have been contemplating. "For," as Sheshbazzar would have said, "fruit trees must be *protected*, as well as cultivated. No wonder if a *tower* is wanted in a vineyard, seeing a *lodge* is needed even in a 'garden of cucumbers.'"

Now, however different our times and circumstances may be from those of the first Christians, they are not so different as to change the character or the spirit of personal piety. Neither the work nor the warfare of Faith ended, when Faith had no longer to "stop the mouths of lions" in the amphitheatre, nor to "quench the violence of fire" at the stake, nor to hide from the edge of the sword in "dens and caves of the earth." Piety did not cease to have enemies in the world, when the lions of persecution died: nor to have intimidations, when the fires of martyrdom were extinguished; nor to have hindrances, when the obscurity of the wilderness was exchanged for the publicity of the city, and the fellowship of mankind. That was, indeed, a great change of circumstances, for which we cannot be too mindful and thankful. The lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places. We have "a goodly heritage," compared with that of the first followers of the Lamb. They had to follow him in "a howling wilderness," through fire and water. Compared to this, our lot is in a garden of Eden, where we can sit or walk with equal safety under our own vine and fig-tree; none daring to make us afraid. But still, if there be nothing in our national Paradise to hurt or destroy the body, there is much to peril the soul. There is both forbidden fruit and a tempting serpent in our Eden. And, alas, more disciples are drawn away from Christ now, by the pleasures and profits of the world, than seem to have been driven away from him then by persecution. More "fall from their steadfastness" in this time of peace, than in that time of war.

Why is this? Many reasons could, no doubt, be assigned for the melancholy fact. The chief reason, however, is, that so many have either no deep fear of falling, or no adequate sense of what is necessary in order to enable them to stand. They do not exactly care but little whether they stand or fall. They are neither reckless, nor altogether heedless, of consequences. It is their wish, "to stand against the wiles of the devil," and to "withstand in the evil day" of trial and temptation. They even *hope* to do so. And they are so conscious of meaning well, that they almost think ill of any one who is afraid lest they fall. "Fall, indeed! Why should they be suspected of treachery or unsteadiness! Did they not give good evidence, at their outset in the ways of God,

that they were savingly converted? Did not experienced and judicious Christians assure them then, that a work of grace was begun in their souls, and would be carried on by the Holy Spirit unto the day of complete redemption? And, have they not kept their name and their place in the church, ever since, quite as well as the generality? Fall, indeed! Let him that thinketh he standeth better than they do, take heed lest he fall."

This is a wrong spirit certainly: and yet, I must confess, that the way in which some warn others against falling, is almost enough to provoke such a retort. There are monitors who seem as if they would not be much surprised, nor even very sorry, if we did fall away. There are reprovers who betray a mean suspicion of our sincerity, as well as a proper sense of our defects. There are also counsellors, who, although they do not utter warnings in a spirit of pique or suspicion, are yet too caustic, or utter nothing but warnings. They caution others, as if grace were no great security against falling, even whilst it lasts; and even as if it might be all lost at any moment.

If Job's friends were "miserable comforters," such persons are miserable guides; and almost as dangerous as those who prophesy only "smooth things." It is, perhaps, difficult to say, whether those who prophesy harsh things only, or those who prophesy smooth things only, are most dangerous. One thing is certain—they are both very unlike Christ, and both ignorant, alike, of the human heart. That, can neither be led on in holiness by fear only, nor kept from going back by hope only. Accordingly, those converts who are kept in perpetual dread of falling, obey without pleasure; and those who are taught that they cannot fall, disobey without much ceremony or compunction.

How do you feel on this subject? Whether do you take for granted that you shall not fall, or take measures to enable you to stand? On what security against falling away, do you lay hold oftenest and lean most? Not, I hope;—not, I pray!—on the *abstract* theory of final perseverance. Falling is begun, whenever a man or a woman, instead of *persevering* in prayer and watchfulness, presumes on safety without them. And when any one comes to argue his case thus,—“If I am decreed to be saved, I cannot be lost, whatever I neglect;” instead of praying over his case thus,—“Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe;” he is fallen far, both from the doctrines and spirit of grace. He has then given up *known* Truth, for *unknown* Decrees. Yea, he has ceased to *consult* God; and begun, if not exactly to defy him, to alter his decrees, yet to tell him that, if there be a decree, he cannot alter it.

The cool effrontery of this calculation is horrible, just because it is so cool! It makes a *supposed* decree of the eternal mind suppress all the holy principles and feelings of the eternal mind. It sets against all the *present* will of God, the presumption that there has been a *past* act of the Divine will, which he is bound to abide by, whatever be the consequences to his law or his grace. The fatalism of the Mohammedans is nothing to this!

You are shocked at it. Well you may. Let it teach you, that the heart can be “desperately

wicked,” as well as “deceitful above all things.” And, do not imagine, that nothing but gross sins can produce this fool-hardiness. It springs often from losing the power of godliness, than from the loss of moral character. This dreadful game of hazard is more played at, by those who become lax in religious duty, than by those who are loose in morals. It is the *slothful*, not the sensual; the *worldly*, not the vicious, who try most to find out “byeways” to heaven. The sensual do, indeed, presume; but it is not upon *past* decrees being in their favor; but upon *future* displays of mercy, coming in time enough to save them. It is the slothful who try to believe, that there may be some eternal purpose, which will prevent them from being lost. This is sad work! And, observe, how extremes meet in it: both classes are equally afraid of the *present* will of God. Neither can hope in him, just as he *is* and *feels* at the moment. Both see that his immediate feelings must be against their conduct; and, therefore, the one class throw themselves upon the chance of former purposes, and the other upon the chance of future good-will.

You have not “so learned Christ!” When you repeat to yourself his promise: “I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish,” you also remember his description of their character,—“My sheep hear my voice, and follow me, and a stranger will they not follow.” Thus it is only the followers of Christ, who cannot be plucked out of his hands, nor out of the hands of the Father. Accordingly, you see and feel that, were you to turn back, or to give up following the Saviour, you could have no more hold upon the power which *keeps* his flock “unto salvation,” than they have who never professed or wished to be his sheep. This is well so far, because it is wise.

In what way, however, do you calculate upon Divine power keeping you from falling away from Christ, and thus keeping you from falling short of heaven? How do you expect this keeping power to act for your safety? How do you draw upon it for strength, to stand before trials and temptations? I multiply these questions, because that power acts by *rule* in preserving both the sheep and the lambs of Christ from apostacy, and thus from perishing. It keeps them “through *faith* unto salvation;” and not in spite of unbelief. It is not only “able to keep them from falling;” but it does so, by making them “able to stand.” Its ability works by *enabling* them to be faithful unto death. The *law* of preserving power runs thus,—“Work out your own salvation; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

These distinctions are neither too nice, nor too numerous. God has made them; and, therefore, you are bound to mark them. You have no right to turn away from them peevishly or impatiently, saying, “I can stand well enough without so much attention to rules, or to the relation of doctrines. I do not want to be a theologian!” Well; most certainly I do not wish to make you one. You want, however, to be kept from falling; and that, you cannot be, but by being *enabled* to stand; and that you will not be by God, but in his own way of exercising keeping power. You are not, therefore, so intent upon standing, nor so afraid of fall-

ing, as you give yourself credit for, if you give yourself no trouble about the way in which God keeps his children, through faith unto salvation. He says to them all, more than that he is *able* to keep them from falling; more than that "he is *faithful*, and will do it." He commands them all thus: "Take unto you the *WHOLE ARMOR* of God, that ye may be *able* to stand." Yes; this is necessary, if you would wrestle successfully, either with flesh and blood, or with the powers of darkness. Satan will put on the whole armor of his power against you; and the world will put on the whole armor of its snares against you: and your old nature will put on the whole armor of its depravity against you: how then can you stand in the evil day of their joint or single assault, if you do not "put on the whole armor of God?" Eph. vi. 10.

Did this sacred oracle ever strike you before? It contains the whole history and mystery of that familiar maxim, "Ye stand by faith;" and of that familiar warning, "Take heed lest you fall." Indeed, you cannot obey the one nor the other, as God enjoins them, without taking unto you the whole armor of God.

"But that armor is so much!" you will say. True; but it is not more than your temptations and tendencies to fall. There are, indeed, six parts of it;—the girdle of truth—the breastplate of righteousness—the greaves of peace—the shield of faith—the helmet of salvation—the sword of the spirit—besides all prayer and watchfulness—but, which of them could you do without? Which of them could you wield or wear effectually without the others?

Look twice at this question, before you attempt to answer it. Without the girdle of truth, you may fall into error. Without the breastplate of righteousness, you may fall into legality. Without the shoes of the gospel of peace, you may fall into despondency. Without the shield of faith, you may fall into apostacy. Without the helmet of salvation, you may fall into despair. Without the sword of the spirit, you may fall into cowardice. And without prayer and watching, you may fall into any thing, however bad or dangerous. Thus, if you will number up the ways in which others have fallen, or even the dangers to which you yourself are exposed, you will not say again, that "the whole armor of God" is too much or too varied.

Nor is it *cumbersome*, even as a whole. It may seem so at first sight, because it seems something additional, if not different, to the means by which you have been able to stand hitherto. But this is in appearance only. You have had it *all on before* now; and you never found the service of God so easy, nor the salvation of God so sweet, as when you were clothed with the whole armor of God. I mean, that there have been times when you have believed, and hoped, and prayed, and watched, and warred, and worked with all your heart; thus doing all you could, to stand. Now although you did not call this care, "putting on the whole armor of God," it really was so: and, accordingly, you stood by doing so. For, where, what, had you been, at the close of some evil days of temptation, if you had not made an effort to resist Satan, and to renounce the world, and to deny yourself? You, of course, think more of the grace

which enabled you to make that timely and necessary stand, than of the stand itself. And so do I. But still, it is the *stand*, which shows *how* "grace helps in time of need." What it enables us to do and endure, is the measure of what it does for us, and the mode in which it helps our infirmities.

Do not tire of this formal advice. I would have you "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" and, therefore, I urge upon you, to "take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand;" and tell you, at the same time, that this means no more than you *ought* to mean, when you say, that your own strength is insufficient, and grace essential, in order to your standing. I will go further and say, that the advice given in this oracle is just as kind and cheering, as when God says in another of his oracles, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." This is, indeed, what he says to them when their "warfare is accomplished;" and the other what he says whilst the warfare is going on; but both are in the same spirit, and equal proofs of his attention to all who are engaged in the Christian warfare! He arms the warrior, as well as crowns the conqueror; and gives grace as willingly, as he will give glory cheerfully.

Look again at the whole armor of God, in proof of this. Why; every part of it proclaims as much *peace* to you, as it proclaims war against sin and Satan. If you must wear a helmet, it is "the hope of salvation," not the fear of perishing. If you must wield a sword, it is "the sword of the spirit," which is the word of God; and by that, Christ vanquished Satan in the wilderness. If you must employ a shield, it is the faith of the glorious gospel, not the buckler of fasts, penances, sackcloth, or celibacy. The righteousness which you are bound to put on as a breastplate, is what you wish to be found clothed in, as a robe, on the last day. And what is prayer, but access to God as your father? Yea, what is watching, but taking care of the hope, and the peace, and the joy of salvation?

Thus, doing "all to stand," is far more than duty. To stand firm, is, to stand safe; to stand composed; to stand prepared for the issues of life or death. Sheshbazzar would have said, "it is to stand as the mountains around Jerusalem, or as the cherubim on the mercy-seat; where the eye of Omniscience watches, and the arm of Omnipotence guards."

Take another view of these preservatives against falling. You want and wish for the *whole* guardianship of God on earth. I mean you would not be satisfied with less, than being "kept by his power through faith unto salvation." Such a keeping from the evil of the world, as would not keep you from being condemned with the world, would not please you. No wonder! Should not God, then, be pleased as well as you? Ought he not to have his own way, if you wish him to save you with an everlasting salvation? You need the whole of his grace, and wish for the whole of his glory; and, will you refuse to take the whole armor of God, in order to secure all this to yourself?

You feel this appeal! Do then *take* that armor, and take it unto *yourself*, and "put it on."

What is the use of merely knowing, that there is a breastplate, a helmet, a sword, and a shield, by which a Christian may be able to stand? What is the use of complimenting their power as great, or their polish as splendid, or their device as beautiful! If you need them, *take them*; if you admire them, *put them on*. They are not like the armor in the Tower of London, hung up to be gazed at, or to remind us of the good soldiers which Christ had in former times. He wants good soldiers still; and, as formerly, "women" amongst them, who will not accept "deliverance" from the cruel mockings of the world, nor from the scourges of Satan at the expense of a good conscience.

NO. V.

VARIETIES, FROM MISTRUST.

Is it your desire to glorify God? You know and confess that it is your duty. There are also some ways of glorifying God on earth, which you would be glad to try, if you had the means. Were you wealthy enough to found a mission in China, where the gospel was never fully preached; or in Asia, where its golden candlestick has long been extinguished; or in the yet unvisited wilds and islands of Africa and the Pacific; would not you help to fill the earth with the glory of God? Were you even wealthy enough to relieve (without injury to yourself) all the real poverty in your neighborhood, and thus to bring all the poor under the gospel, would you not count that way of glorifying God to be both duty and pleasure? Or, could you write a book in favor of the gospel, which would command as much attention, and take as strong a hold upon the public mind, as the works of Shakspeare or Milton, would you not feel bound to trade with that talent at once, and thus to glorify God with your spirit, by pouring all its intellectual wealth and splendor around the cross? Or, were it only signified to you, as to Peter, "by what death you should glorify God," would you not prepare for that death with much diligence, that thus your triumph or tranquillity might illustrate and commend the power of faith?

None of these things, upon this scale, may be within your power. There is, however, one way of glorifying God, which is completely within your reach, and would remain so, even if you were in abject poverty, or had only a weak mind: for God condescends to consider himself glorified, by "strong faith." We learn this pleasing fact, from the history of Abraham. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory unto God."

Perhaps you are ready to say,—"I feel as unequal to exercise strong faith, as I am unable to bestow much charity. There is nothing so weak in my piety, as my faith. I have, at times, strong convictions, strong fears, strong desires; but strong faith, I am a stranger to. I can say at any time, with the poor man in the gospels, "Lord, help thou mine unbelief;" but I cannot always preface this prayer as he did, by saying, "Lord, I believe." Indeed, I hardly know what to think of myself,

when I examine whether I am in the faith. I can neither class myself with believers, nor with unbelievers. I have not the real peace of the former, nor the false peace of the latter. The state of my mind seems something *between* both. Besides, I become fluttered, and confused, and intimidated, whenever I go far into the question of saving faith."

You are not singular in all this. Many feel exactly as you do on this point. Indeed, all Christians, are, at times, more or less embarrassed on the subject of faith. In general, however, those who are most jealous and fearful of the genuineness of their own faith, have *least* occasion to be so. Perhaps this is the case with you! I do not throw out this hint, that you may drop the question, nor that you may take for granted the reality of your own faith in Christ; but that you may sit down with composure to examine "whether you be in the faith."

Now the weakness of your faith may, perhaps, arise, in part, from your being somewhat afraid of *strong* faith. We are not always thinking of Abraham, when we think of the faith of assurance. They are not often *very like him*, in character or spirit, who *say* most about their assurance. In general, those who are most like him in humility and holiness, say least about their own faith; and even the little they do say, is uttered in the spirit in which Abraham prayed,—“Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak.” Thus, between the “much speaking” of those who are least humble, and the almost silence of those who are most humble, we are in no small danger of becoming rather suspicious of the tendency of strong faith itself. Whilst we look at it, and judge of it, in Abraham or in Paul, or in the death-song of “such an one as Paul the aged,” we feel no more doubt of its holy tendency, than of its happy influence. In the presence of such examples, we catch ourselves exclaiming,

“O for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what th’ Almighty saith;
To trust the merits of His Son,
And call the joys of heaven my own.”

Not thus, however, do we judge or feel, when professors, remarkable for nothing but *talking* about their experience, speak of their assurance, and security, and cloudless hopes. Their strong faith seems very much akin to presumption. We cannot help feeling as if it were both better and safer, to be weak in faith, than to be strong in *their* way of believing. Besides, it is a very general persuasion amongst those whose piety is most exemplary, that the faith of assurance is sail, which very few have ballast enough to carry, or prudence to manage well.

Now, I readily grant that these are facts which ought not to be overlooked, nor allowed to have but little weight on this subject. Caution is, indeed, peculiarly becoming on such a point as saving faith. Yea, it is necessary: for there are presumers in the church, as surely as there are sceptics in the world. But after honestly weighing all these facts, I cannot forget that God and the Lamb *deserve* strong faith. I frankly confess

that I cannot answer the question,—Why should I have *less* faith in God than Abraham had? The God of Abraham is not changed in truth or love. What he promises in answer to prayer, under the gospel, is not less free or faithful than what he promised under the Abrahamic covenant. God is not a man that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent. He proved this by fulfilling the great promise of that covenant. At the fulness of time, he sent forth his Son to redeem the world from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for them. We ought not, therefore, to be very slow of heart in believing, that he that spared not his own Son, but “gave him up to the death for us all,” will also, “with him, freely give us all things.” This would, indeed, be believing a great deal: but still, not more than God has promised; not more than God is able to perform; not more than he has actually performed to millions and myriads, who were as guilty and unworthy as we can be.

I must, therefore, press and ply you with the question, Do not God and the Lamb *deserve* strong faith from you? Can you assign any *reason*, why you should stagger at their promise, through unbelief, or fear, or suspicion? You certainly cannot assign nor conceive one reason for doubt, if God and the Lamb allow sinners to put as much faith in their promises now, as they allowed Abraham to put; and that, they do both warrant and command! God does not, indeed, speak so openly to us as he did to Abraham; but he speaks as *honestly*, and even more explicitly. He does not call us by name, nor with an audible voice from heaven; but he does better: he puts into our hands the written copy of the everlasting covenant, ratified by his own oath and the blood of his Son, pledging all the eternal honor of the Godhead, that whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish.

Now, really this strong assurance from the lips of God, deserves strong faith. For, what could he say or do more, in order to warrant implicit and imperishable faith in his promises? We really ought to be ashamed, yea shocked, at the bare idea of placing but little faith in them, seeing they are so great, so precious, and so true. Why; if you cannot trust them, what could you trust?—What could be so satisfactory as the assurance, that “it is impossible for God to lie?” This fact, all history, all experience, all the universe rise up to attest and confirm. Neither voice nor vision from heaven, could amount to so much encouragement as this one fact. I must, therefore, repeat, that strong promises from the God of truth and love, deserve strong faith; nor can we have any good reason for withholding it from them.

I know quite well what you are now thinking about. You have been ready to say again and again, whilst reading this essay,—“But how can I be sure that the promises are meant for me? They are the children’s bread; and I am not sure that I am a child of God. They belong to the penitent, the humble, the hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and I am afraid to class myself amongst them. Besides, I find no difficulty in believing firmly the truth of the promises themselves, or their faithfulness in the case of others:

my difficulty is, to believe them in my own case. It is *there*, that my faith staggers.”

Yes; and well it may stagger, if you thus want to be sure of your calling and election, before you venture to believe the glad tidings of the gospel. You are, indeed, perfectly right in your opinion that, in general, the promises belong to specific characters, and are adapted and addressed to certain spiritual states of mind. Of this fact, you ought never to lose sight. Whoever regards all the promises as made to mankind promiscuously, understands neither their excellency nor their design. The greater part of them are, emphatically and exclusively, “the children’s bread.” There are, however, many of them (and these neither weak nor equivocal) the only and express object of which is, to multiply the children of God, or to win sinners to become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. Yes; one class of the great and precious promises are entirely occupied with the manifestation of that matchless love which God bestows, in order that we may be made his children. Nor is this all: the whole of them have it as much for their object to reconcile the world unto God, as to endear God to the church.

Consider this fact, and remember it. It will clear your way, mightily and rapidly, to the point at which all the promises can be appropriated and enjoyed by yourself. What you have now to believe with a strong faith, is not your own election, adoption, or conversion. You cannot, and ought not, to believe these things firmly, until you have more evidence of their truth, in your own experience. Strong faith on these points, can only be warranted by the fruits of faith in your heart and life. But whilst this is true, it is equally true, that even now, and as you are, and however you feel, there are both great and precious promises which you are fully warranted to believe, with all the faith of assurance. The promise, “Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened,” belongs as much to you, and deserves your entire faith, as the promise, “I will never leave you nor forsake you,” belongs to the dearest children of God. What more, therefore, would you have, in order to warrant and welcome you to hope in Christ for your own salvation? God says, “You shall find,” if you seek: “it shall be opened,” if you knock. Unless, therefore, you want to find without seeking, or to be admitted into the household of faith without knocking, your way is as open as promises can make it.

If this view of the matter do not remove your difficulty, you have, in some way, mistaken the nature of faith itself, as well as the character of strong faith. It may be, that one cause of the weakness of your faith, is, that you tried at first, to believe more than was *necessary* at first; and thus by grasping at every thing in the gospel at once, you got a firm hold upon nothing. I do not throw out this hint in the way of reproof at all; but just to throw you back upon first principles, and in upon your own recollections. I know too well, (to wonder or blame,) how naturally your mind desired all the comforts and securities of the covenant of grace, when you first saw all your wants and dangers. You then wished to be sure of your election, sure of your adoption, sure of your pardon, sure of your acceptance, sure of

your union to Christ, sure of your participation of the Spirit, and sure of your final perseverance. You saw your need of all this; and, therefore, you sought for all this, and tried to believe all the promises in which this host of spiritual blessings are presented to the church. But your faith was too weak. You were not able to believe so much for yourself! Can you wonder, now that you look at the case in this light? Do you not see, that the *infant hand* of faith cannot grasp so much at once! Is it not obvious, that by thus trying to lay hold on every thing, it can get no sure hold upon any thing! Just suppose, for a moment, that, instead of this, you had set yourself to believe *one* point in the gospel, at first. Suppose that point had been the promise, that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" or the assurance, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Either of these great truths is quite sufficient to give any sinner a good hope through grace; or at least, to create hope enough to keep him praying: and that (every Christian will tell you) is the best kind and degree of hope, eventually. Now, do you not see how your faith, if it had confined itself at first to the willingness of God and the power of Christ to save you, might have soon become strong faith? Consider: the willingness of God, and the ability of the Lamb, are no doubtful nor dark truths. If any thing be clear or sure, they are unquestionable and resplendent facts. Their strong evidence is calculated to produce strong faith. They win the confidence they ask for, when they are duly weighed. Well; *this* is the GOSPEL! This is just what a sinner should believe, when seeking mercy through the blood of atonement. His language should be, "God is willing, and Christ is able, to save even me." Why then should not you go back to this point, if, after all your efforts to get higher, you are still in doubt as to the reality of your faith? Why not try for a time what you can make of believing these two truths? Until you have strong faith in them, your faith in every other part of the gospel must remain very weak.

What! is it but weak here also? Do you not believe that God is *willing* to save you! Do you really doubt the ability of Christ to deliver you from the wrath to come? If so—you must be very unhappy whenever you think of your own case. I would not, for worlds, doubt either truth. My heart would break, or my reason expire, if I suspected that God was unwilling or Christ unable to save me. But, as they have not said so, I do not suspect the willingness of the Father, nor the power of the Son. Why should I suspect either, when neither *forbid* me to hope? Nothing short of a *prohibition* to hope, could warrant despair: and as there are express commands, as well as beseeching invitations to hope in Christ, despair and despondency must be as criminal as they are unwise.

No. VI.

VARIETIES FROM MODESTY.

It is both gratifying and encouraging to be able to trace in our own character and spirit, any real

resemblance to those who are truly pious. Any likeness we bear to "the excellent of the earth," helps us to hope that we are not altogether strangers to the grace which made them so excellent. We see and deplore the sad difference there is between them and ourselves, and sometimes feel discouraged as well as reproved by it, because we can hardly see how we can ever come up to their standard: but still, we cling to the fond hope, that we have something of their spirit, or a spark of the same grace. We cherish this hope the more freely, because our conscience bears us witness, that we really desire to be more like the Christians we admire most, and would be very glad to get over that in which we chiefly differ from them.

Another thing very encouraging, is, that we can trace some resemblance between their early experience and our own. Few things, perhaps, please or surprise us more than the discovery, that some of the loveliest and most happy Christians had to struggle hard, at first, with many of the same doubts, fears, and temptations which now harass us. This, we did not expect to find in the experience of the very holy and happy. We imagined that, from the first, their conversion must have been so complete, as to place them above all such conflicts between the flesh and the spirit. We took for granted, that they had never found it difficult to believe, or to hope, or to pray. This difficulty we thought peculiar to ourselves. And, as to treachery of heart, weakness of purpose, changeableness of feeling, and floods of vain and unholy thoughts, we were almost sure that no real Christian had ever felt as we did. We heard, of course, our pious friends speak of their having had to go through deep and dark waters, and to sustain some heavy burdens: but we did not allow ourselves to suspect that unbelief, or the prevalence of a wrong spirit, or the pressure of temptation, entered into their trials. We thought that they could only mean, the trial of their faith and patience, by afflictions or losses: not by the plagues of the heart, or by the treachery of the conscience.

It was, therefore, no small help to us, when we found out that "no strange thing had befallen" us, in having to struggle so much against fightings without and fears within. We were not, of course, glad that others had hearts as bad as our own, nor that grace met with much opposition in all hearts: but we were glad to know the fact itself. It proved to us, that our case was neither desperate nor singular: and thus prevented us from giving up all hope and effort, as useless in our own case. It showed us, that the day of small things ought not to be despised; seeing it had often been followed by years of great things in the experience, character, and career of many.

We have then been somewhat encouraged by discovering, that the beginnings of our piety, had parallels in the early experience of the best. Did it ever occur to you, whilst marking this with pleasure, that just in proportion as you are of "one spirit" with the saints on earth, you are of "one spirit" with the saints in heaven also? If you have never followed out this sweet thought for your own encouragement, it is well worth your while to do so now. The fact is fraught and fragrant with strong consolation, to all who are

anxious to be sure that they have been "made to drink into one spirit" with the children of God on earth: for, if the persuasion that you had done *this* would cheer you, how much more cheering to discover that your best principles and desires are in *harmony* with the leading principles of the whole family in heaven? You are quite sure that their views and feelings and desires are right. You see at a glance, that they cannot err nor mistake. And, do you not see also, that so far as your spirit resembles theirs, even you are right too? Consider this. The great principles which prevail in heaven are not natural on earth; do not spring up by accident in the human mind; nor can they be learnt, so as to be loved, by human means. Whoever loves them, has been taught by the Spirit of God. You have as certainly been illuminated and led by him, if you try to think and feel and act towards the Saviour as the saints in glory do, as these saints have been perfected by the Holy Spirit. Yes; the same hand that completed their sanctification, has begun your sanctification, if you are trying to enter into the spirit of heavenly principles.

Do not say, on reading this, that neither your principles nor feelings will bear to be tried by a heavenly standard. It is not so true as it is plausible, that, if some *earthly* standards of piety make you ashamed and even afraid of yourself, comparison with perfect spirits must overwhelm your hopes altogether. This is plausible, but it is not true. In some things, indeed, it is only too true, that you bear none of the image, and breathe none of the spirit of the family in heaven; and in nothing are you *very* like them. There is some pride even in your deepest humility: some sloth in your most cheerful obedience: and much weakness in your strongest faith and love. I neither forget nor palliate this, in you or myself. We may well hide our heads in the dust, when we compare ourselves with holy men and women of old, even when they were not *perfect*; and, now that they are holy as God is holy, or "without spot before the throne," we may well shrink, and that not a little, from all comparison with them. Indeed, as to the *degree* of their holiness, there is no comparison between us and them: it is all contrast or dissimilarity.

You see clearly, that I am not about to flatter or compliment you. As, however, I must tell you plainly that, if you "have not the spirit of Christ, you are none of his," I feel equally bound to remind you, that whatever you have of it, is really a part of heavenly piety, and as truly likeness to the saints above, as it is to the saints below. Now, I remind you of this fact, because whatever agreement you may be able to trace out between your own spirit and their spirit, will be more easily traced up to the Holy Spirit, than even the points in which your experience resembles that of Christians on earth. For, do you not see, that if you think at all, feel at all, desire at all, as saints and angels do in heaven, there must have been some *heavenly* influence shed upon your heart, and some *divine* change passed upon your spirit? For as neither saints nor angels have taught you their creed or their emotions, and as you did not begin your piety by trying to copy their example, all

real participation in their great principles must have sprung from divine teaching.

This conclusion is not so easily drawn, and cannot be so safely drawn, from your resemblance to your pious friends on earth. I do not say that it is *unsafe* to draw it from likeness to them. I have already shown, that it is both useful and encouraging to do so at first. It is not, however, the surest ground to go on: for as we do not know the *heart* of any man or woman fully, we cannot be absolutely certain that likeness to them is conversion to God. In the case of glorified spirits, however, there is no room for any hesitation. We are absolutely sure of their sincerity, simplicity, and perfection: and therefore, if we have any real fellow-feeling with them, we have real evidence of having passed from death to life.

Is there then any thing in your *humility* akin to *their* humility? They veil their faces before God: they fall down before the throne: and even when they stand around the throne of God and the Lamb, they sing of nothing but the wonders of the grace which brought them to glory. Now this, all this, you intend to do when you join their company. Like them you will be glad to have eternity all before you, and the throne all open to you, in order to express, for ever, your adoring wonder and gratitude, that one so unworthy as yourself should have been put among the children and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Well; is there any thing of this spirit in your humility now? Does your conscience bear you witness, that you lie low before God in the dust of self-abasement; that you are ashamed, and pained, and burdened, on account of your sins and short comings; that you can hardly bear to think of your own vileness and weakness, nor see how you can ever forgive yourself; that you feel at times as if your heart would break, and your soul melt within you, through heaviness and shame, because of your guilt and ingratitude? This is the humility, in an earthly form, of the saints in heaven. They, indeed, no longer weep, nor groan, nor sigh, nor blush, in the presence of God. His hand has wiped away all tears from their eyes, and his smile banished all pain from their hearts: but this wonderful love has only deepened their humility. The very absence of all sorrow and sighing, leads their spotless spirits to pour out the fulness of their gratitude, with as much modesty as rapture. Their most *breathless* pauses of wonder and joy occur, when they remember what they were on earth! Thus they are all as fully "clothed with humility," as with the white robes of righteousness and holiness.

Now, although the degree of their humility is, of course, imitable on earth, the *kind* of it is not so. To be ashamed and bowed down in spirit by the remembrance of sin, is real humility in heaven and on earth. And, are not you so? O, yes, if a sense of guilt and unworthiness lie heavy on your heart, you have drunk into the same spirit, which leads all the armies of the redeemed to prostrate their crowns, and to fall on their faces, before the eternal throne. And this is not less true, if you are chiefly pained and ashamed, because your penitence is not so humble as you feel it ought to be. Your humility would not be genuine, if you were quite satisfied with its depth.

sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment ;" and the Spirit put this promise in writing, as openly and willingly as Christ put it into words ; thus undertaking to be the illuminator of the world as fully as Christ was the Saviour of the world. And not less willingly did he remind the apostles of the promise, that "He shall abide for ever" in the church. He sanctioned and sealed that pledge too, although he foresaw all the labor it would involve, and all the provocation he would have to endure. His majesty took no offence at the weakness or the unworthiness of the myriads he had to teach ; nor his purity, at the vileness of those he had to sanctify ; nor his patience, at the waywardness of those he had to guide ; nor his independence, at the poverty of those he had to console. In a word, like the Saviour, the Spirit came, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

The epistles of the New Testament form another illustration and proof of the love of the Spirit. In them, he as faithfully taught the writers "all things," as in the gospels he had brought "all things" to their "remembrance." In the latter he led them back to "all truth ;" and in the former led them "into all truth."

My limits will not allow me to trace, throughout the epistles, the fulness nor the frequency with which he expanded and explained "the truth as it is in Jesus." And it is not necessary to do so. You can see at a glance, that whilst he adhered to the very letter of all that Christ taught and did, he also brought out the spirit of the whole, in new forms of argument and appeal, of power and glory, which set all the Saviour's "apples of gold, in pictures of silver."

The experimental design of this little treatise requires now, that the office of the Spirit as a remembrancer, be traced in the well known fact, that he still suggests and applies the things of Christ unto the mind. "He shall take of mine," said the Saviour, "and show it unto you." This he did to the apostles ; and the gospels were the first fruits, and the epistles the full harvest of his revealing love. He did not, however, cease to suggest nor to apply the truth, when he closed the canon of Scripture. No ; he closed the canon, to open the heart to understand and enjoy it. Accordingly, every Christian recollects well, many timely and useful suggestions of both promises and warnings, which, if they had not been brought to his remembrance by the Spirit, he must have sunk under trials or fallen before strong temptations. How true it is, that "when the enemy cometh in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him !" That repelling and protecting standard is never a *new* truth, in the sense of revelation ; but, in the sense of application, it is, although brought from the old armory, as new to the mind, as if it were created at the moment. For then, we see in some promise what we never saw before. It suits and soothes us, just as if it had been made for no other purpose or person. It takes a place in, and exercises a power over, the mind, which could hardly be greater, were it a direct communication from heaven, or an entirely new gift from the Spirit. I do not wonder, whoever else does, that such timely and tender applications of suitable promises, have

been mistaken for revelations. This was a mistake : but it is no mistake, to regard that application as the direct and immediate work of the Spirit. There is new *work*, although only the old word.

I have not a little sympathy even with the more questionable experience, which speaks of—"getting a promise"—*lighting* upon a promise—having a promise wonderfully *borne in* upon the mind." When the promise itself, and not the *manner* of obtaining it, is the source of comfort, I see no harm nor weakness in ascribing to the Spirit, the *timing* of its application. Getting hold of a promise at a critical moment, is no small blessing. In the case of those who have but little knowledge, or weak faculties, it is a very great blessing. Yes ; and even those who are mightiest in the Scriptures, and strongest in mind, are glad at times to plead before God, like David, "the word in season," upon which God had "caused them to hope," in the day of former calamity or darkness.

I am fully aware that the Spirit has often been dishonored by having ascribed to him, visionary and crude applications of insulated passages of Scripture. He applies nothing but the meaning or the sense of the word ; and that, only in its holy design. He whispers no sweet promise in the ear of the disobedient or the backsliding, except to remind them, that they dare not appropriate it to themselves. He has nothing to do with the comforts which those get from "dark sayings," who refuse to take comfort from the plain glad tidings of the gospel. It is an evil spirit, not the Holy Spirit, who leads into fanciful interpretations of Jewish history or ceremony, which the apostles have not spiritualized.

In like manner, it may be laid down as a universal maxim in the teaching of the Spirit, that he never stops at *one* lesson. Whenever, therefore, any person takes up with one promise, suddenly or signally brought home to him, and then rests his hope of pardon upon that promise, to the neglect of all other truth, it is quite certain that the Spirit of truth did not apply the comfort : for he leads into all truth, whoever he leads. This, indeed, he does gradually in almost all cases ; but in no case does he begin the lesson which does not go on, or which is not followed up by others. But whilst I readily allow and proclaim, that they are all duping, and thus ruining their souls, who are satisfied with having had a promise brought home to them at one time, whilst ever since they have paid no attention to the Scriptures, and but little to personal religion, I must contend for the experimental fact, that the Spirit does, from time to time, open and apply the Scriptures to the emergencies of the divine light, and according to the wants of the prayerful. A standing proof of this occurs in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath. It is always the case, that experimental sermons seem to some of the audience, actually made for them ; and as much to the point, as if "the man of God" had heard their family conversation in their secret prayers, in the morning. He, of course, knew nothing of either ; but the Spirit, who led them to desire and pray for a word in season, led him to the word they wanted.

There are only two things farther, which my

space will allow me to hint at. The first is, that it would be a sad abuse of the love of the Spirit, to depend on his suggestions, to the neglect of searching the Scriptures, and treasuring up the word of Christ in our hearts. Those who neglect this duty, will not find the Spirit to be their remembrancer for comfort, in the day of trouble. He will not supersede the use of the Bible by suggesting any thing, but warnings, to them who do not use it; for he is the Spirit of truth, not of impulse; and only "the Spirit of wisdom," to those who honor him as "the Spirit of revelation."

The other hint is, (and it might be expanded to a volume,) that we should find it almost as useful to go over the New Testament, looking for the mind of the Spirit, as the apostles found it to listen to the Spirit, when they wrote from his dictation. How differently the words of Christ sounded to them, when the Holy Ghost repeated and explained the truth as it is in Jesus! How often they must have said, whilst hearing the Spirit, "*How foolish and ignorant was I, when I first heard these wonderful things from the lips of Christ!*"

Why should you not go over your Testament again, marking, from page to page, the new light and loveliness, which you now see, in parts that once made no impression upon you? Why not number and review every part, which you have found experimentally true and sweet? Do mark in the *margin* of your closet or family Bible, every passage which the Spirit has ever shone upon. You will thus increase your own evidences of having been led by the Spirit; and confirm your confidence in his teaching; and meet his love to yourself by more ardent love to him than you have yet cultivated. And all this, he would soon and amply repay, by witnessing to and sealing his own work on your soul.

No. XII.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT AS A COMFORTER.

WHEN the Saviour promised to send the Spirit as a comforter, he called him, "another Comforter;" not a *different* one to what he himself had been. It is by overlooking this fact, or by not considering what kind of a comforter the Saviour himself was whilst in the world, that so many of the serious and the suffering are uncomfortable. They look for more, or for another kind of comfort, than was promised; and, not finding it, they are disappointed, and thus tempted to reckon the consolations of the Spirit "few or small." This is a sad mistake! The Spirit is always, in the case of all believers, just such a comforter as Christ himself was, when he comforted his disciples.

Look at this fact. What kind of a comforter was the Saviour to his friends, whilst he remained with them on earth? Not a "miserable" comforter, certainly: but still, as cautious as he was kind; as prudent as he was tender, he comforted his disciples, just as he taught them:—as they could bear it, and not always as they wished for it. Accordingly, when they would have called

down "fire from heaven," to punish their enemies, he not only refused their wish, but also reproved their spirit thus, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Luke ix. 55. In like manner, when they gave way to an ambitious spirit, and strove which of them should be greatest in his kingdom, Jesus rebuked them both by words and significant actions. All this, and much more, he did and said, whenever they fell into wrong tempers or habits. But, was he not their comforter, notwithstanding all the reproofs and warnings he thus gave them from time to time? They themselves felt that he was so, in the best sense: a comforter, who neither spoiled them by indulgence, nor disappointed them by caprice. Peter, no doubt, felt very uncomfortable at first, when Christ said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savorest not the things which be of God;" and equally so, when told that he would deny his Lord. The mother of Zebedee's children, and her two sons also, thought it any thing but comforting them, when Jesus refused to maternal solicitude, the right and left hand seats in his kingdom. Martha, too, found him any thing but the kind of comforter she wished and expected, when she was absorbed, beyond all reason and necessity, with worldly things. But still, none of these chastised children, thought his consolations few or small upon the whole. Accordingly, "sorrow filled" all their hearts, when Jesus began to explain to them his approaching return to heaven. The sad prospect of losing his endeared company even for a time, soon revealed to them, what a comforter he had always been!

Now it was whilst they thus remembered, and appreciated, and felt, both the *kind* and the *degree* of the comfort they had enjoyed for years, that he promised the Spirit as "another comforter," or just *such* another friend as he himself had been; a very present help in all real trouble: a very gentle reprover of all imaginary fears; and a very faithful monitor against whatever was sinful in conduct or temper. You thus see, that they could not mistake his meaning. It must have been as obvious to them, from their own experience of his comforts, as his promise of "Peace" was to them, when he qualified the words, "Peace I leave with you," by the additional clause, "My peace give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This timely appeal to his *own* peace, was intended to prevent all visionary dreams of earthly ease. The disciples knew well what his peace had been! Not peace arising from the absence of trials or temptations; but peace under them, and notwithstanding them all. And equally well did they know what kind of a comforter the Saviour had been: and thus they were prepared to look only for similar comfort, when the Spirit was given.

You now see at a glance, that Peter would not expect the Holy Ghost to comfort him, when he gave way to his fiery and rash temper; nor Martha, when she cumbered herself unduly with bustle; nor James and John, if they became ambitious again; nor any of them expect the cheering and sealing comforts of the Spirit, apart from walking in the Spirit. In a word, they would all lay their account, with finding the Holy Spirit of God just such a comforter, as they had found, by

is not true of all your fellow-Christians on earth. Some of them need both sympathy and help, in order to be faithful unto death; and all of them deserve affectionate notice, in order to be useful in life. And, what am I—or who are you—that we should care nothing about our brethren? If those we stand aloof from have faults,—so have we; and if God were to treat us for *our* offences against himself, as we treat them for their offences against us, how should we like it—what would be the consequence?

Besides; are there none in your neighborhood, very low in life—very straitened in circumstances—very much exposed to temptation, just because of heavy trials; but who really have “the root of the matter” in them, notwithstanding all these things? And, are you ashamed or afraid to notice and own them, as Christians? True; they may not do much credit to Christianity, whilst they hardly know how to “make the ends meet” in life. But if you look down on them—if you withhold from them all countenance and counsel,—if they may sink or swim for any thing you care,—who risks the credit of Christianity most?

Do, ask yourself often, how you could *meet* in heaven, without shame, some whom, notwithstanding all their faults, you expect and wish to meet there? True; they will not upbraid you when they meet you before the throne. The *neglected* will not say—You used to pass me even at the sacrament, without condescending to speak or look to me. Those who “came out of great tribulation,” will not say,—“I was sick, and ye visited me not; hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not.” This will never be repeated, after Christ has said it from the Judgment-seat: but, should it even be pardoned by him in your case, how could you ever forgive yourself, when you see the poor of the flock at his right hand? Why, their very silence and cordiality will then be more humiliating to you (although not at all intended to be so) than the most cutting reproofs.

Sympathy with poor and afflicted Christians is, remember, as much a *leading* as it is a lovely feature of heavenly character. It is the very brightest feature of the *social* character of the angels of God. We know more about their sympathy with the penitent, the suffering, and the dying, than of their nature or their history. I have sometimes come, in thought, to “the innumerable company of angels,” saying to myself, without any difficulty, until I saw them in the vision of John, “Are they not all ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation?” Whilst I thought of them only as a whole, I was not much humbled by their ministry. But when I began to observe them, one by one, in the glass of the Apocalypse, I have been compelled to exclaim,—What, *all* ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation? That angel—“having the Seal of the living God?” Yes; he has it to seal his servants on earth. What, those four angels “having the four winds of the earth?” Yes; “that the winds should not blow to hurt” the trees in the garden of God! But that angel, “clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow around his head, and his face as it were the sun,” is he too a ministering spirit to men? Yes; and well pleased to hold in his hand “a little book!”

But that angel, “having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand,” is he too a ministering spirit to man? Yes; he shall bind Satan, and shut him up for a thousand years, that he may “not deceive the nations.”

Truly, *they are all ministering spirits!* Yes; and any of them would have gloried to carry Lazarus to heaven. All of them rejoiced when *you* repented: and is there any heir of salvation, you are ashamed to own, or unwilling to aid? Woman! “know thyself;” thy duty; thy destiny.

No. VII.

VARIETIES, FROM FRETFULNESS.

ANY one can expose or reprove that feverish and fretful care, which is always foreboding the worst, or embittering life by complaints, and suspicions, and clamor.

It is peculiar to the Saviour, to treat undue care with equal tenderness and fidelity. He makes the fretful and the foreboding feel, that he knows thoroughly “what is in them,” and yet that he feels for them. Whilst he measures and weighs their unbelief so minutely, that we lay our account with hearing him say, “They have no faith at all in Providence,” to our surprise, he only says to them, “O, ye of little faith.” Thus, just when he seems about to disown them entirely, for their distrust of Providence, he lays his hand upon them as gently as upon sinking Peter, asking, “Wherefore didst thou doubt?”

Did you ever mark the inimitable skill with which the Saviour met the over-anxiety of his first disciples, when they began to dwell too much, and too peevishly, upon the questions, “What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

For a moment he almost identified their “carking care” about life and the means of life, with the clamorous solicitude of the heathen, for temporal things: “after all these things do the *Gentiles* seek:” but he did not leave them to suspect, from this reproof, that they stood in no nearer relation to God, than the heathen. No; he immediately added, “Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” Matt. vi. 32. Thus, in the same breath, he rebuked their wrong spirit, and yet upheld their adoption. “This is not the manner of man, O Lord God!”

Did you ever observe, that he never calls upon us to compare our lot with that of those who are *above* us, or with that of those who are *below* us, upon the ladder of providence? Except in the single case of persecution or reproach for his own name’s sake, he does not even remind us of the greater trials of some others. “So persecuted they the prophets which were before you,” is the only instance in which he teaches patience or contentment, by comparisons. This is another remarkable peculiarity in the ministry of the Saviour. He taught providence from nature, not from society. He made the *lilies* of the fields, or the *birds* of the air, his texts, in preference to all the facts which the varieties of life furnished,

whether his object was to reprove or to soothe, the fears of his disciples.

There was consummate wisdom in this, whether you see it or not. It would do you good, to "consider the lilies of the field and the birds of the air," when you feel the burden of your cares overwhelming. This may seem very unlikely at first sight, to you. Like myself, you may be ready to say,—my cares are too heavy to be alleviated by such considerations : it seems almost mockery, or mere sentimentality, to send me to learn of birds or lilies. What could the growth of flowers, or the preservation of birds, teach me? What light could such common things throw upon my *uncommon anxieties*?

In this flippant way, and in this wrong spirit, are we inclined to meet the Saviour's advice : for there is *no sense* in such objections. They are mere sound. Accordingly, we should be condemned out of our own lips, were he to press us with the single question,—What benefit do you derive from brooding over your cares? You think and say, that you could derive neither light nor good from considering the things I commend to your notice. You cannot, however, say that the consideration of them would do you any *harm* : whereas I know, and you must acknowledge, that the views you take of your cares rather aggravate than alleviate them. You contrast your lot with those *above* you ; and that mortifies you ; you compare it with those *below* you : and that discourages you, because you are thus compelled to see how you may sink still lower in the world. Thus when you look *up* the ladder of life, you are dissatisfied ; and when you look *down* it, you are ready to despair. Now, to say the least, feelings of this kind would not be produced by considering how the lilies grow, and how the birds are provided for! I readily grant, that such little things do not appear capable of teaching much wisdom : but still, what they do teach gives no offence : which is, you know, more than can be said with truth, of some of the *graver* lessons you get, occasionally, *from certain persons*.

Besides there is a great deal of *pride* in our reluctance to be "shut up" to an exclusive dependence upon God, and to a complete deference to his will. For, why should we be *less* dependent than irrational things? We are not so pure as the lily, nor so innocent as the bird. We can, indeed, do more for ourselves, and we can think much ; but if both our doing and thinking have for their real object, to try how far we can take our affairs out of the hands of God, into our own hands, we need not wonder that God should cross us at times, and always leave us to feel that we cannot remove nor lighten our burdens by impatience.

You do not believe, perhaps, that you want to take your affairs out of the hands of God, into your own hands. There may be only two or three things in your lot, which you wish to alter : and as there are many good things in the lot of others, which you are content to be without, you think it rather unfair to be charged with pride or perverseness, merely because you want to have your own way in a few points. Besides, you may even be conscious that one great reason, why you are so dissatisfied with some things, is, because

they distract your mind, and thus prevent you from serving God so well as you wish to do. It is, therefore, you think, both ungenerous and unjust, to be suspected of, much more to be charged with, any such impious design as that of wanting to be independent of Providence. You never dreamt of such a thing—did you?

Do not answer this question, until you have considered another peculiarity in the Saviour's lessons on providence. He does not teach confidence in, nor resignation to Providence, either as abstract duties, or for their own sake, as Christian virtues ; but chiefly for the sake of keeping up the spirit and habit of prayer, and a proper regard to the eternal welfare of the soul. Now the fact is, we really *pray* no more, either for spiritual or temporal blessings, than just to the extent of our sense of entire dependence on God. Our words may go beyond this ; but our praying stops where our sense of dependence on the divine good-will and power ends. There may be some worship and some devotion in what we say to God, when we no longer feel utterly helpless, nor absolutely at his disposal ; but there is no prayer. Nothing is prayer, but that asking, or seeking, which proceeds from a full conviction, that God alone can help or uphold us.

Now we are unable to bear this deep sense of utter helplessness, in regard to *every* thing we need for life and godliness. Our spirit would sink entirely, if it always felt *all* its needs, as it feels some of them. Our Heavenly Father does not forget this. "He knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust." He teacheth us dependence, as well as other things, only as we are "able to bear" the discovery. Accordingly, it is only at a *few* points in the circle of our wants, or of our weaknesses, that we are compelled to cry out, "Lord save, or I perish." It is only now and then that the full truth of the oracle, "vain is the help of man," is forced deeply home upon us. We are not left, however, to forget this oracle, nor to give up that prayer. God will have us—by some means—sensible of our absolute dependence on his will.

Now, what if the hardship, the cross, or the burden, which you and I so want to get rid of, and which we bear so ill, be the very best thing, indeed the only thing, that could keep us at the *feet* of God? Remember ; we must be kept there by something. It is also but too true, that those things in our lot which please us most, do not send us oftenest into our closets, even for *thanksgiving*—to say nothing of supplication for their continuance. Might not, therefore, the removal of the cross which we fret under, remove us from the closet altogether?

Now this is just the *secret* of our case. That one thing in our lot, which we are so anxious to get rid of, is the very thing which makes us feel that we cannot control providence, nor do without help from God. Were, therefore, that "cup to pass away," this *feeling* would pass away with it.

It is all fallacy or fancy, to reckon otherwise. We may mean well, but we judge ill, when we take for warranted that we should serve God better, if our chief anxiety were taken away. I do

not, of course, intend by this remark, to convey the idea, that no other cross could keep us aware of, or awake to, our entire dependence on God. He could make any cross or crook in our lot, answer the same purpose. But, why should he change the rod which check us ; or, why should we wish it changed for another ? Another must be sent in its place ; and must be heavy enough to produce in us, as in Paul, the settled conviction that God is MASTER.

THE END.

THE
LOVE OF THE SPIRIT;

TRACED IN HIS WORK.

A COMPANION TO THE

"EXPERIMENTAL GUIDES."

✓
BY ROBERT PHILIP,

OF MABERLY CHAPEL.

"Why do those who speak much of the love of God and of Christ, say so little about the love of the SPIRIT?"—*Dr. Henderson.*

"He comes to us with the love, and upon the condescension, of all the blessed TRINITY."—*Dr. Owen.*

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THOMAS GEORGE, JR. SPRUCE STREET.
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INTRODUCTION.

It is a singular fact, that we have no treatise on the Love of the Spirit. The British pulpit and press have covered themselves with glory, by their exhibitions of the wonders of Redeeming Love, as these characterise the good will of the Father, and the mediatorial work of Christ; and by unrivalled demonstrations of the personality and agency of the Holy Spirit: but no writer, that I know of, (and I have searched diligently,) has traced the wonders of the Spirit's love, in Redemption. OWEN has certainly done much to endear the Spirit to believers, in his brief treatise on "Fellowship with the Holy Ghost," at the close of his masterly work on "Communion with God." The Spirit is, however, the gift of God and Christ to the world, as well as to the church. His mission embraces both the world and the church, just as the love of God and the death of Christ embrace them. John xvi. 8. Accordingly, quite as much is said in Scripture, to commend him to the confidence of both, as to demonstrate their absolute and universal need of his holy influences. But how many overlook this fact! In general, the unconverted and the undecided, turn their need of the Spirit, into apologies for delay. They think of his grace as power, rather than as love; and thus imagine that they may safely wait for it. Many of the penitent also, although penetrated with a sense of their need of the Spirit, are yet very doubtful whether he will work all that in them, which they feel to be necessary for them.—They are afraid to calculate upon the exercise of his power, in their own case. And not a few, even of those who can hardly doubt, that he will carry on the good work he has begun in them, are evidently more influenced in their hopes, by his power, and faithfulness, than by his delight in his work, or his love to the subjects of it. They are not so much at *home*,—when they speak of the love of the Spirit to their souls, as when they speak of the love of God or of the Lamb. They dwell with solicitude and solemnity, upon their need of the grace of the Spirit; but not with rapture, or complacency, on the richness, freeness, and glory of his grace. They do not exactly question its fulness, its freeness, or its tenderness; but neither do they rejoice in them, as in the tender love of the Father, or the intense love of the Son. The Father's promise of the Spirit, or the Son's gift of the Spirit, rather than the grace or

the glory of the Spirit *himself*, is most relied on, and rejoiced in by believers in general. They rather plead the promises of his help, than lean directly upon his own good will and great power for help. Their confidence and complacency are thus less in himself, than in the covenant which pledges his influences; although his place in that covenant was his own choice from eternity, and has been his chief delight ever since he entered upon its duties, and will be the "rest" of his love until the end of time!

I have seen and felt so much of this, and found so little to counteract it, in our theology, that I was compelled, for my own sake, to trace out, step by step, the love of the Spirit in the work of the Spirit. How far I have succeeded in restoring this old truth to its original place, it is not for me to say. My object was gained when it took its proper place in my own mind and ministry; and, therefore, my conversational essays on the subject, are addressed, not at all to theologians, as such, but entirely to private Christians; and thus they have no critical or theological pretensions whatever. Indeed, they are merely experimental hints, brought home to the bosom and business of those who, like myself, cannot forget, that unless we have "the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his." We thus require to see the love of the Spirit, in order to see how we can obtain and retain the Spirit himself, as proof of our personal interest in Christ. The hold we need upon the power and grace of the Comforter, we can only get, by getting hold of his love; for until we see how he loves our souls, we cannot see how he can abide with them, either as a consoler or as a sanctifier.

It has, therefore, been my sole aim to engage the attention and win the confidence of all who apply to themselves the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" I have tried to seat myself at their side, and to enter into their difficulties, and to whisper in their ear; that thus they may judge for themselves, whilst interchanging experience with a "brother and companion," in the spiritual tribulation arising from the fear of "not having the Spirit." And if I have ever been enabled to help the perplexed or the doubting, I would fain hope that this Companion to my Experimental Guides, will increase that help, as well as confirm it.

NEWINGTON GREEN, 1836.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT.

No. I.

THE LOVE OF THE TRINITY COMPARED.

It is by comparing the revealed perfections and works of the Father, Son, and Spirit, that we arrive at the sublime conclusion, that these three are one; the same in substance; equal in power and glory. The mystery of this fact is not at all increased, nor is the sublimity lessened at all, by the circumstance, that less is said concerning the divinity of the Spirit, than concerning that of the Father and the Son. This can only surprise those who forget or overlook the fact, that the Saviour expressly guarded his disciples against expecting much information from the Spirit concerning the nature of the Spirit. "When he is come, he shall not speak of himself." John xvi. 13. "He shall testify of Me." John xv. 26. "He shall glorify Me." John xvi. 14. After these assurances from the lips of Christ, it is unreasonable to expect so many declarations of the divinity of the Spirit of God, as of the divinity of the Son of God. Besides, it is not the *number* of texts, which proves a point of this kind, but their explicitness. One explicit declaration of the Godhead of the Spirit, is just as conclusive as a thousand, when Scripture is concerned. It is not, indeed, so satisfactory to the eye, nor so imposing to the ear in controversy, as a host of passages; but as all the validity and value of a host of proofs depends on their individual truth, one ought to be as decisive as any number; for if we cannot depend on the truth of one, many cannot give us certainty.

I readily grant that, in a matter of such infinite importance as the divinity of any being, who claims our supreme homage and confidence, we have a right to know his title before we yield to his claims. Although, therefore, I have maintained the sufficiency and satisfactoriness of even one text of revelation on this subject, I quite feel that it is natural, and not unreasonable, to expect, that such a truth as the Godhead of the holy Spirit, would be frequently introduced in Scripture. And it is so. His personality and divine agency are not only implied in all the revealed accounts of creation, providence, and redemption, but are also often (some hundred times) and unequivocally expressed. In fact, as much is *revealed* concerning his divinity, as concerning the divinity of Christ, although less is *said*.

This is not a distinction without a difference, nor without a cause. Repeating a truth is not adding to its sum or certainty, however it may enhance its importance to us. The divinity of Christ is true, not because it is often repeated; but it is often repeated because the first mention of it was

true; and because it is a truth of supreme importance; and because, in his case, human appearance had to be counterbalanced and counteracted by divine declarations. He took upon him "the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man;" and, therefore, according to the depth of that humiliation, had to be the height of the proof of his equality with God; and according to the number of his privations and woes, had to be the number of distinct attestations to his original riches and glory. But in the case of the holy Spirit, his advent involved nothing which veiled his glory, or contrasted with his godhead, or seemed to contradict his claims; and, therefore, as no counterbalance was wanted, none was given.—Enough was said to declare him to be the eternal Spirit: and, in order to prove the supreme importance of this truth, his divine agency runs through the whole fabric of divine truth, and is so interwoven with the entire Scriptures, that it cannot be separated from them without tearing them to pieces.

I would not have touched this subject at all, had I not felt it necessary to justify my attempt at a comparison between the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in redemption; for it is quite unnecessary to multiply books upon the divinity of the Holy Spirit. "What can the man do who cometh after (Owen) the king," except to simplify or condense? My simpler object is, to compare the love of the Trinity, just as others have compared the natural perfections of the Father, Son, and Spirit; in order that their equality in love may be as familiar as the unity of their essence. And there is need of this argument: for, although no Trinitarian would hesitate for a moment to say, that the Spirit as well as the Father, "is love;" nor to add, that the persons of the Godhead must be as much one in heart as in glory; yet, no writer, that I know of, dwells with complacency, or appeals with triumph, or argues with power, on the love of the Spirit. Christ does so. The apostles do so. And Owen evidently saw and felt the capabilities and claims of the subject. In general, however, theologians do not. They content themselves with taking it for granted; and thus leave the fact in an abstract or indefinite form, which neither touches the heart, nor tells upon the character of plain Christians. Indeed, many of the serious "suffer loss," through this inadvertency. They are somewhat afraid of the Spirit. I mean, they do not see that his heart is as warm, and his hand as willing, to do his work in redemption, as the heart and hand of the Father and the Son were to do their part. They have thus less confidence in the Spirit, and less love to him, than towards God and the Lamb. They do not, however,

gave less attention to him. Happily that is prevented; our theology, both from the pulpit and the press, being rich, beyond comparison, in glorious exhibitions of the necessity, the fulness, and the freeness of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Both the lesser and the greater stars of evangelism are all culminating in the grand scriptural point, that the influences of the Spirit are just as *free* as they are necessary, and as accessible as they are indispensable. This is as it should be. And nothing is wanted in order to complete this "demonstration of the Spirit," but to enshrine and crown it with the wonders of his love. That, I am quite unequal even to attempt: because my own mind can only deal with an *individual* mind, and not with a general subject, in religion. I never could theologize nor generalize at all, apart from trying to carry a practical or experimental point, with a supposed person, to whom I write, just what I should say in conversation. I am, however, on this occasion, more than usually reconciled to this weakness or defect of my own mind; because my conversational hints upon the love of the Spirit, will in no wise forestall the subject; but may, perhaps, create a taste for it in the circle of my "GUIDES" and "CLOSET LIBRARY;" and thus help, at least, to call forth some "Master of Israel," to complete our theology, on the doctrine of "The Comforter." Why does not the author of "*The Holy Glory of the Son of God*," bring out that of the Spirit?

Having thus stated how the subject stands at present, I proceed in my own way. Did you ever notice the emphatic brevity of apostolic language, when divine love is the subject? "God is love," says John. "The love of Christ passeth knowledge," says Paul. With the same sublime brevity, Paul says, "I beseech you by the love of the Spirit." Thus in all the three instances, we are evidently thrown upon a fact, which words cannot express, and which needs no epithets to commend it. Accordingly, it is always illustrated by other facts, and not by descriptive words. Thus, when John says, "God is love," he immediately adds,—"In this was the love of God manifest towards us, because God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iii. 8. Here facts are every thing, and phraseology is nothing but the bare statement of them. Thus also Paul writes, when illustrating the love of Christ, "He loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. "He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," says John, to the seven churches in Asia. Rev. i. 5. Even in heaven, the language of eternity, either does not supply descriptive words to saints or angels, or they prefer facts, in celebrating the love of Christ; for there are no epithets in the new song: "Thou art worthy; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. v. 9.

Now exactly in this way, or by facts, and not by descriptions, is the love of the Spirit illustrated in Scripture. When Paul pleaded with the Romans by "the love of the Spirit," he had just before reminded them, that "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us" in

prayer, that the Spirit "led" the children of God, "dwelt in" them, and "witnessed" with their spirit to their adoption. Rom. viii. In like manner, when the Saviour commended the Spirit to the confidence of the church, as "another Comforter," it was not by eulogizing or explaining his love, but by stating what he would *do* when he came: the Comforter shall lead you into all truth; shall bring all things to your remembrance; shall abide with you for ever.

Thus, it is not from words, but from his *works*, that the love of the Spirit should be estimated, when it is brought into comparison with the love of the Father, or the love of the Son: nor is it any valid objection against the equality of their love to the world and the church, that there is no suffering, nor any humiliation, in the whole history of the Spirit's love. This is equally true of the Father's love. That too involved no suffering nor privation: but no one doubts, on this account, the reality, the greatness, or the strength of the love of God. No one suspects it of being at all less than the love of Christ, because Paul does not say of it, as of Christ's, that it "passeth knowledge." The absence, therefore, of this epithet in his appeal to the love of the Spirit, implies no inferiority in that love. In a word, its measure is to be found in what the Spirit *does*, just as the measure of the Father's love is to be found in what he *gave*, and the measure of the Son's love, in what he *endured*.

Let us then contemplate the love of the Father. It is amazing! But for it, there would have been no Redeemer, no Sanctifier; and, therefore, no salvation on earth, just as there is none in hell. The love of God is, therefore, the real and original fountain from which all the streams of mercy and grace flow to us, in a river of the water of life. That river could flow, however, only upon channels of "everlasting righteousness," or in full consistency with law and justice; and nothing but the atonement of Christ could be such an honorable medium. Divine love could become redeeming love, only by a sacrifice which magnified the law, and glorified the divine character. The love of God is not, therefore, irrespective of the work of Christ. It both required and provided an atonement, to legitimate and charter the reign of grace in the divine government. And all this the death of Christ did.

Law and justice were not, however, all that had to be satisfied and glorified in the highest, before divine love could become *redeeming* love, honorably and consistently. HOLINESS, also, had to be satisfied, and magnified, and glorified in the highest; and that could only be done by making the redeemed holy, or the pardoned perfect.

Here there was room—occasion—necessity, for the love of the Spirit. The saved had to be sanctified on earth, and perfected for heaven: and what but love—infinite love—could have led the Holy Spirit to undertake the sanctification of the Church, which Christ purchased with his own blood? This he did undertake; and he will so consummate its perfection, that divine Holiness shall be as much satisfied and glorified with the eventual purity of the redeemed, as justice is with their escape, or law with their acquittal. If, therefore, the love of God passeth knowledge, in

pitying our misery as sinners, and in bringing all his sympathies to bear honorably and effectually upon our salvation, is not the love of the Spirit, in pitying both our weakness and depravity, and in bringing all his grace and strength to bear upon our meetness for heaven, love that passeth knowledge in its warmth and wonders? Where is the difference, between the love which *fits* sinners for heaven, and the love which *opened* heaven, by the blood of the Lamb? Both are infinite!

Let us now contemplate the love of Christ. If the comparison fail at all, it will fail here. It shall not succeed, however, by any forcing or stratagem on my part. It will fail unnecessarily, however, if you determine to think only of the *sufferings* of Christ; for as there was no *penal* tests of the love of the Spirit, there can, of course, be no comparison on this point. Christ stands alone, in all the glory of suffering and dying love! The Father's love endured nothing penal or painful, for the world or the church. That it would, however, have done so, had any paternal suffering been either proper or necessary, we can hardly doubt. Well; why not judge in this way of the love of the Spirit also? There was no more occasion for him to suffer at all, in proof of his love, than for the Father to do so in proof of his love. Doing any thing unnecessary, is not a demonstration of love. Doing what is *wanted* most is the demonstration of that; and nothing of suffering was wanted, in order to atone, when the sacrifice of Christ was finished. His love left no room in Gethsemane, or on Calvary, for the love of the Father or of the Spirit to redeem by *price*; because he left no drop in the cup of wrath, shrunk from no stroke of the sword of justice, and refused no demand of the law. So far, therefore, the love of the Father, and the love of the Spirit, stand in the same light and relation to redemption by price.

You are prepared to go a step farther towards a comparison, now that you see how the facts stand. The real question is now,—what was *wanted*, after Christ finished his atoning work? There was his sacrifice—perfect, all sufficient, and glorious! Nothing could be added to its merits, or its efficacy, or its acceptableness, before God, as a ransom for souls. But still, around that sacrifice, when it was “finished,” stood a world, yea, a church, which knew neither its merits nor its meaning; and which never could have understood them, had not the Spirit explained them; and never would have employed them, had he not applied them. Thus, although the fountain for sin and uncleanness was opened by the death of Christ, there were none to wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, until the love of the Spirit enlightened and led them. But for his love, therefore, the love of Christ would have remained unappreciated and unknown, both to the world and the church. But for what the Spirit did, all that Christ endured would have had no saving effect upon man on earth, although its instantaneous effect in heaven, was the confirmation of all the angels in their holiness, and the ratification of all the saints in their happiness, and the complacent “rest of God” in his love. O, surely, if God is love because he so loved the world as to give his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, the Spirit must be love also,

in the same sense, and to the same degree; seeing he gave all the light which revealed that “unspeakable gift,” and all the will and power by which any and every sinner applies to the Saviour. The Son is thus as much the free and unspeakable gift of the Spirit to *individuals*, as he was the gift of God to the world.

It is desirable on this subject, that our thoughts and feelings should run occasionally in the same channel, and at the same rate they do, when we realize to ourselves vividly what must have been the condition of the world, had no Christ undertaken its cause. In that case, the world would either have been another hell, or the gate of “the place prepared for the devil and his angels;” conscience would have had no peace, and hope no anchor; life no charms, and death no antidote: for man could not have been even what heathen man is, either in condition or character, had there not been a mediator between God and man from the very moment of the fall. No; even the heathen are not a specimen of what the world would have been “without Christ:” for, bad and abominable as idolatry is, it has some moral laws, and proclaims some hopes, however vague or fallacious; whereas, there would have been nothing but “a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation” every where on earth, as every where in hell, had not Christ interfered on our behalf. This fact, in common with many others, renders the love of Christ unspeakable.

Well; just ask yourself, what would the world have been without the work of the Holy Spirit? I will not allow myself to answer this question, by supposing the worst. Say, if you will, that we should have gone all the length in morals and hope, which they reach who resist the Spirit. It certainly would have been something, to have even a form of godliness, and a ceremonial of worship, and a theory of Christianity. These, without the Spirit, are useful. Christianity, however nominal, exalts the character of nations; and however corrupted, is still the most powerful check upon immorality. But what is civilization or morality, were they even universal, whilst the heart is unchanged, and heaven not desired, and God not loved, and the Saviour not prized? All this—would have been the case, every where and all along, had not the Spirit loved the world, and sanctified the church!

These hints do not, I am aware, call up a horrid scene before the imagination: it is, however, an appalling scene to a sober mind. Only think!—had all churches in all ages been churches only in name; all ministers mere functionaries for hire; all Christians mere formalists; then, all hope would have been delusion: all faith presumption; all death damnation! This has not been the case. But why? No church would ever have become spiritual, by its own power or choice. No man could have become wise unto salvation, by unaided efforts, however arduous. No sufferer could have extracted solid comfort from the promises, by mere pondering. What do we not owe to the love of the Spirit! But for that, the thief saved on Calvary would have been the *only* trophy of the cross of Christ. Yes; Paradise might have been barred at once and for ever, when he entered: for, without the Spirit, no man, afterward, could either

have gloried in the cross, or understood it. O, if we love Christ, the love of the Spirit to us, should be an inspiring theme! It is, remember, a part of the greatness of the great mystery of godliness, that Christ was "justified by the Spirit." Yes; had not the Spirit justified the claims of the Saviour, by clearing up the glory of his person and work; and endeared him, by applying his sacrifice and grace, even his disciples could not have done so, and we should not have attempted it. I have been chiefly influenced and regulated in these hints, by the *stress* which the Saviour himself laid upon the work of the Holy Spirit. He had, evidently, as much reference to it, in dying for us, as the Father had to him in pardoning.

Consider this fact. You say, and justly, that but for the love of Christ in dying for us, the paternal love of God could not have saved us, consistently with all the perfections of the divine character and government. Now, this is no *reflection* upon the love of God. It is, in fact, the very glory of his love, that it thus required to be in full and everlasting harmony with all righteousness. Well; in this perfect harmony with eternal rectitude, the love of Christ placed the love of God: and just so, did the love of the Spirit place the love of Christ. For, it is the very glory of the Saviour's redeeming love, that it depended as much on the sanctifying love of the Spirit, as the paternal love of God did on the blood of the lamb. Without the work of the Son as a mediator, the Father could not have honorably become *our* Father; and without the work of the Spirit as a sanctifier, the Son could not have honorably become *our* mediator. Christ himself, therefore, looked as much to what the love of the Spirit would do for us, as God looks to what Christ has done for us. Thus, as our redemption by price required the death of Christ, so our redemption by power required the agency of the Spirit.

These remarks are, I am aware, but general, if not somewhat vague. They are purposely very general; because the love of the Spirit is traced, in this little volume, throughout all the work of the Spirit, from its beginning as the good work of grace, on to its consummation in glory. I conclude this essay, therefore, by reminding you that the love of the Trinity, although not brought into competition, is so far brought into comparison in Scripture, that the name of Father, Son, and Spirit, is equally connected with baptism, and equally associated in the benediction upon the churches; and in heaven, the Spirit appears as "seven spirits before the throne," that we may know and acknowledge the all-perfect Godhead of his nature, and the all-sufficient power and freeness of his grace. Rev. i.

Who can read the following passage from Dr. Owen, without regretting that his purpose was "to number rather than to unfold" the actings of the Spirit? "The principle or fountain of all his actings for our consolation, is his own great love and infinite condescension. He willingly proceedeth, or comes forth from the Father, to be our comforter. He knew what we were, and what we could do, and what would be our dealings with him. He knew we would grieve him, provoke him, quench his motions, defile his dwelling-place; and yet he would come to be our comforter!

"Want of a due consideration of this great love of the Holy Ghost weakens all the principles of our obedience. We lose both the power and pleasure of our obedience for want of this consideration. Let the soul lay due weight on it: 'The Holy Ghost, in his infinite love and kindness towards me, hath condescended to be my Comforter. He doth it willingly, freely, powerfully!—What have I received from him? In the multitude of my perplexities, how hath he refreshed my soul! Can I live one day without his consolations? And shall I grieve him by negligence, sin, or folly? Shall not his love constrain me to walk before him in all well pleasing?'"—*Owen on Communion with God, 3d Part.*

No. II.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN CONVERSION.

"The work of Christ, and the work of the Spirit," says Dr. Wardlaw, "are mutually necessary to each other's efficacy and are thus both *alike* indispensable to the salvation of the sinner. Without the work of Christ, the Spirit would want the *means* or the instrument of his operation; and without the work of the Spirit these means would remain inefficacious and fruitless. Without the work of Christ, there would not have been, for any sinner, a foundation of hope towards God; without the work of the Spirit, no sinner would have been induced to build upon this foundation. Christ has opened the way of access to God;—the Spirit brings sinners to God in the way which Christ has opened."

This bringing of sinners to God, by "the new and living way" opened by Christ, is *CONVERSION*.—None are brought nigh unto God, nor turned from the error of their ways, by the power of the Holy Spirit, but those who are led "in the way everlasting;" or, as Paul expresses the transition from the broad to the narrow way, "made nigh by the blood of Christ." Without this, there may be departures from sin, and approaches to righteousness, in some things, and for a short time; but, without this there is no saving conversion. The *heart*, until affected by the cross, does not follow the feet, however fast or far they may run in the path of general duty, by the impulse of ordinary motives.

You have, no doubt, observed and felt this.—Perhaps you can recollect instances in your own history, when you made considerable improvements in your conduct, and resolved to make still greater; but neither with good-will. It was compulsion, not choice; fear, and not love, which produced these reformatations. Had they even been greater, therefore, and all lasting, they were destitute of the very first principle of true religion, good-will. Forced or slavish obedience is not service rendered to God, but a tax paid to the conscience to moderate its uneasiness.

What a mercy it is, that the gospel contains and presents motives which can win the heart as effectually as the law can work upon the conscience! Were not this the case, we should never yield to God any cheerful or willing obedience, and thus never please or be pleased: for, as it is

impossible to please God at all "without faith" in Christ, so it is impossible to find pleasure long in works without faith.

Well; if you are thankful that Christ is "the way" to the Father, you ought to be equally thankful that the Holy Spirit is the guide *to* and *in* that way. Did you ever pause to consider how much love the Spirit displays in thus leading sinners to God by Christ? It is worthy of your special notice and gratitude. It will not divert nor divide your attention from the love of God in giving his Son, nor from the love of Christ in giving himself, for us. It will increase your love to God and to the Lamb, to trace the love of the Spirit as that shines in the conversion of sinners.

Now there is no conversion *from* sin until there be conviction *of* sin: and there is no conviction of sin, which tends to Christ or to holiness, but that which the Holy Spirit implants in the soul. Thus, there is great love even in the *severest* part and form of the work of the Spirit.

We forget this, or overlook it, whilst conscience is either as unquenchable fire, or as a gnawing worm, within us. Such convictions seem, then, to be sent in judicial anger, not in *judicious* love. It is, however, in love, that they are sent: witness the design of them at Pentecost. Had not Peter's audience been cut to the heart, they would not have cried out for mercy, much less have looked to Christ for it.

Natural conviction, however strong, never looks to the cross; nor, when very strong, ventures to hope or pray for mercy. It is *supernatural* whenever it tries to relieve itself at the feet of the Saviour. It is sent in love, whenever it sends us to the gospel to search for hope, or to the mercy-seat to seek for hope, or to the cross to wait for hope. Conviction is then the Spirit wounding, that he may heal; casting down, that he may lift up again. It is evidently his work even when there is only a desire for salvation; and although the way of salvation be almost unknown at first. Accordingly, both Peter and Paul recognised, in that trembling inquiry, "What shall we do?" the quickening power of the Spirit. Neither the Jews at Pentecost, nor the jailer at Philippi, knew what to do when they were awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger. The sacred fire that inflamed their conscience did not enlighten their understanding equally at the same time. It only revealed danger, and originated the desire to escape, in the first instance; and did not shed guiding light nor cheering warmth upon any mind, until the apostles proceeded to unfold "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel."

Here, if any where, we may learn to distinguish between natural conscience, and supernatural conviction. The latter (as might be expected) is not reckless nor desperate, even when most overwhelming. The sinner quickened by the Spirit, may see no way of escape at first; but he desires one, and is looking and inquiring for one. He may have no hope for a time; but he wishes to hope. Like Jeremiah's penitent, he is willing to "put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope." In a word, his sufferings do not irritate his spirit against God. The agony of his conscience does not harden his heart. There may be a passing thought, or a momentary feeling of a

dark and desperate character; but neither is indulged or welcomed. Both are dreaded and hated.

This is not the case with mere conscience, when it breaks loose upon a sinner. It can sear as it suffers, just as some sores *mortify* as they spread; or it can madden against God and man, until the opinion of both is despised, and the power of both defied. Such reckless remorse ought not to be ascribed to the strivings of the Holy Spirit. It is not, indeed, natural nor common for even a very guilty conscience, to make a man a terror to himself, or to those around him. Indeed, this occurs so seldom, that it has been the chief cause of confounding natural and supernatural conviction. It is so very rare, to find even a very wicked man trembling or despairing; and so common to see many as wicked as he is, yet quite fearless, that Christians have been tempted by the anomaly, to ascribe all awakenings of conscience to the work of the Spirit.

This may be well meant; but it is ill judged.—All the conviction wrought by the Holy Spirit, is intended to "glorify" Christ, by rendering his precious blood, precious in the sinner's estimation: and, therefore, all hardening horrors, and all terror which has no tendency towards the cross or the mercy-seat, should either be left altogether unexplained, or referred to any thing but the agency of the Holy Ghost; for he can have nothing to do with the production of alarm, which either steels the heart against God, or drives the soul away from the Saviour. It is "the sorrow of the world," and not "godly sorrow," that worketh death and despair, in every instance, where there is no insanity: (and whenever there is reason to suspect insanity, (of which vice is not the cause,) there is no reason for putting a harsh construction even upon despair itself.

These distinctions ought not to be lost sight of: and yet, they ought not to be hastily applied. The first aspect of an awakened conscience, however awful, should not be treated as mere remorse. The Spirit, as in the case of the jailer, may have much to do with convictions, which, at first, are altogether terrific, and almost desperate. He had, of course, nothing to do with the rashness of the jailer; but he evidently had much to do with the "trembling," which followed it.—Whilst the jailer drew his sword to kill himself, the Holy Spirit was certainly not convincing him of sin: but when he called for a light, and sprang in trembling" and inquiring, Paul treated him as a man quickened by divine power. However, therefore, an awakening may open, or express itself, for a time, it ought to be met promptly, fully, and even kindly, by the glad tidings of a free salvation; and never reckoned mere remorse, until it has defeated all the means of grace.

If these hints throw any light upon the way in which we should judge and act in the case of others, they throw still more light upon our own convictions, of the evil and danger of sin. These are more than natural, yea, more than providential, if they have either endeared the Saviour to us, or led us to pray fervently for an interest in his atonement and intercession. Convictions which lead to this, are the leadings of the Spirit; and all in love, however painful they may be.—Had the "hold" which the angel took of Lot, left

its marks upon Lot, he certainly would not have thought it too hard, when he saw the fire burst on Sodom, and found himself safe in Zoar. It was the grasp of an angel's hand; firm, because friendly; and unrelaxing, because resolved to save.

Well, therefore, may we trace to the love of the Spirit, any and every conviction, which drew our attention to the love of Christ. Well, may we sing, however we have smarted,

"Eternal Spirit, we confess,
And sing the wonders of thy grace."

Another signal proof of the love of the Spirit in conversion, is, that he convinces chiefly of the sin of UNBELIEF. Remember the Saviour's own account of this characteristic feature of the work of the Spirit: "When he is come, he shall reprove the world of sin: of sin, because they believe not in me." This being the point on which the Holy Spirit chiefly plies the conscience, the Saviour does not hesitate to call him "the Comforter," even whilst he is only convincing of sin. Conviction, like affliction, is, indeed, any thing but comfort in itself; it "is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby." Thus, although not comfort, it is preparation for it, and the only way to it.

This is not, however, the most striking fact of the case. There is love—love, wonderful in its tenderness and strength, in thus making unbelief the point at which his sword pierces deepest and oftenest. We could not bear its "piercing, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow," in the case of any other sin. No human mind could sustain a full discovery of the entire evil of sin, either as it affects the whole character and government of God, or as it entails misery on others. Nothing but the twofold immortality of soul and body conjoined, could endure to see how one sin can perpetuate itself along all the line of a man's posterity, unto the very end of time; and run its consequences, even in a visible stream, through the bottomless pit for ever! I doubt very much, if there be one man or woman on earth, who could bear to see the influence of even their folly, upon all who witnessed their example, whilst they were unconverted. Yes; put vicious example out of the question entirely for a moment; our mere indecision and formality, for years, told upon every one around us, who were on the outlook for excuses, with hardening effect; and they are now hardening those around them; and thus originating a line of ruin which shall never stop.

The CONVINCER of sin sees this; but he does not show it. In mercy he conceals it, and singles out the sin of unbelief for the fullest exposure, because that is the only hinderance to the pardon of all other sins, and because the conscience itself has no natural tendency to take alarm at mere unbelief.

The love manifested in this is unspeakable. We both require, and can bear, to see a great deal of the sinfulness of neglecting the Saviour; for, although no discovery of the evil of sin is more humbling, or so melting, no discovery brings with it so much to balance itself. A clear sight of un-

belief comes from a still clearer sight of the glory and grace of Christ; and thus the disease and the remedy are seen together at the same time. The light that reveals the baseness and ingratitude of unbelief, comes pouring down from the face of Jesus upon the face of the sinner; and although it almost blinds him for a little, as it did Saul of Tarsus, it also enables him to cry, "Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do?"

You will enter into the spirit of this hint, when you pause to notice the point at which real conviction settles down into habitual penitence. It may begin at our besetting sin, and run like fire from crime to crime, through all the catalogue of our transgressions, until the conscience is in flames. But this, although it burns fiercest, is not what abides longest, nor what humbles most. It is the calm, solemn, weighty consideration, that all sin was against grace as well as law; which, like the small still voice at Horeb, wraps the face in the mantle of humility, and lays the spirit in the dust before God. The agonizing sense of individual sins subsides before the hope of pardon; but we never can forgive nor forget our long neglect of the great salvation! Nothing shames or shocks us so deeply and lastingly, as the recollection of having lived without Christ in the world. We see our hearts laid bare in that guilt and folly. We cannot palliate or soften our disregard of the Saviour.

Thus the abiding conviction, by which abiding humility is produced in the soul, is, what Christ said—"of sin, because of unbelief."

My fellow penitent! we cannot tell nor conceive how much suffering the Spirit of grace has saved us from, by making us feel chiefly the exceeding sinfulness of unbelief. Had he shed and kept as much light upon any other sin, our spirits would sink for ever under it. Perhaps we must be far down in eternity, before we are capable of bearing a full sight of all sin!

If you understand these hints as I intend them, they will suggest to you a very satisfactory reason why conviction is so calm and gentle in the case of many converts. Do you not see at a glance, that the Spirit's point (which is to glorify Christ) is gained, when unbelief gives way? There is, then, no occasion to set "on fire the whole course of nature." Its pride and self-righteousness are demolished when Christ becomes precious to the soul.

Were this duly considered, you would not be afraid lest your convictions, if they have been gradual and gentle, be not the work of the Holy Spirit. He does not work for the sake of working; but in order to bring the soul to the Saviour as its only refuge, and as its supreme example: and therefore, if you have given your heart to Christ, you have as little occasion to doubt your own conversion as to question Lydia's, whose heart the Lord opened without tempest or terror.

On the other hand, if your convictions were deep and distracting, that only shows how deep and stubborn your unbelief was. The Spirit shot no more arrows into your conscience than just the number necessary to subdue your aversion or indifference to the Saviour. He wounded only in order to heal; and, therefore, only deep enough to make the cure certain. It was all *bad blood*

you lost, however much you bled under his operations.

What do you think now of the love of the Spirit in conversion—in your own conversion? Are you not ashamed, as well as astonished, that you should never have traced nor marked his love thus minutely before? If so, do follow out the manifestation of it by reviewing still more closely his dealings with yourself. You are only on the threshold of his love yet, even as conversion shows it: your own conversion can furnish more lamps to illuminate it.

Consider; what but love could have induced the Holy Spirit to strive with you at all? There was nothing about your heart to attract his hand. He might have justly passed you by: he might have left you for ever when you resisted his first strivings. Oh, were not the Spirit love, equally with God and the Lamb, he would never have tried to make a holy temple of your heart or mine!

Again; what but love gave power enough to your convictions, to render them strong enough to send you fully to the Cross of Christ for relief? There are terrors and stings of conscience which drive some, like Judas, away from Christ, and on to destruction: yours have brought you to your right mind, and set you down where a sinner never yet perished,—at the foot of the cross, and under the shadow of the mercy-seat.

Do speak well of the Holy Spirit to those of your friends who have not yet asked for him. Some of them may be afraid of him. So little is said of his love by many who say much of his power, and the need of it, that not a few are discouraged. Do speak a word in season to those who are thus weary and heavy laden. It will increase your own love to the Spirit, and the Spirit's love to you, to commend him as love to others.

No. III.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN JUSTIFICATION.

To justify a sinner is more than pardoning his sins, much as that is: it is also to accept and treat him as righteous, or as if the righteousness of Christ were his own personal virtue.

This is a wonderful plan of saving the guilty! Well may it be called "the manifold wisdom of God." How sublime, and yet how simple, is this plan! Paul felt all this, when he said of God, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we (who knew nothing but sin) might be made the righteousness of God in him." As if the apostle had said,—For the sake of sinners, God treated his own Son as if he had been guilty; and now, for the sake of Christ, he treats sinners, when they believe, as if they were innocent; not imputing unto them their trespasses, but giving them the full advantage of the righteousness of Christ, just as if it were their own property. "BEHOLD what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God."

It will not divert you from admiring the love of the Father or of the Son in justification, to behold

also the love of the Holy Spirit in it. His love, too, reigns conspicuously in that great act of grace, although not exactly in the same way. He does not, indeed, pass the *act* of justification: "It is God that justifieth." Nor does he furnish any *part* of the righteousness, for the sake of which we are treated as righteous: it was Christ that died and rose again "for our justification." But still the Spirit does something, whatever it be, which so connects both his hand and heart with the reign of justifying grace, that the apostles do not hesitate to identify him with the Father and the Son in this transaction. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God!" to the Galatians, "We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." The Saviour himself said of the Spirit, "He shall convince the world of righteousness." Observe, also, how prominent the place is which Paul gives to the work of the Spirit, when explaining to Titus the process by which believers are justified by grace, in order that they may be heirs of glory: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but according to his mercy, God saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Why? "That, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit. iii. 4-7. In like manner, Peter connects "the sanctification of the Spirit" with the "sprinkling of the blood of Christ," which is the meritorious cause of justification. 1 Pet. i. 2.

Thus, it is not without the warrant of precept or of example, that I invite you to trace the love of the Spirit in justification. The apostles never overlooked or forgot it; nor can any believer be unaffected by it when he studies it. It may not strike you at a glance, but it will amply repay fixed attention.

Now, it is no part of the *official* work of the Father or of the Son, to convince sinners of their need of a justifying righteousness. The Son has brought in an everlasting righteousness by his mediation, and the Father hath set it forth by his authority; but neither officially apply it to the soul, nor stir up the soul to apply for it; that is left to the love of the Spirit to do; and the love which does that cannot be weak or wavering. It is a task which nothing but real love would undertake, and which nothing but great love could accomplish; for we are not soon nor easily convinced of our need of either an imputed or a personal righteousness: both are against the grain of our nature. Indeed, except a man's character be very bad, it is not easy to convince him of the necessity of being better. Many speak as if they actually dreaded, as well as disliked, to be very righteous; thus deeming it not only unnecessary, but in some way dangerous, or discreditable, to be so. No wonder, therefore, that a justifying righteousness should be far from their thoughts, seeing a personal one is thus lightly valued, and even laughed at, when it is zealous of good works.

This is the bent of human nature: I cannot, therefore, but trace much of both the love and power of the Spirit even in convincing us of the necessity of being more righteous than the aver-

age of our neighbors. This is not a natural conviction, nor a conventional maxim: it is a divine persuasion wherever it is a deep feeling. It is a transition, not, indeed, into "marvellous light," but still out of that gross darkness which covers the people (and they are many) who are satisfied with not being worse than others.

I would not attach undue importance to even a deep conviction of the necessity of being better than others; but I must say, that it is a *march* (and not a *dead march* either) gained upon mere conscience, and thus a good sign.

The man who is led thus far in judging for himself how good he ought to be, is, to say the least, in the fair way to discover his need of a better righteousness than his own. Indeed, this discovery is usually made by trying to be good. That effort is either so unsuccessful, or its success, in a few small things, is accompanied with such failures in great things, and with such a sight of the many things which must be added, that the reforming man becomes afraid, and begins to doubt whether his own power is able to carry out his own purposes.

It is often at this point that the need of a perfect righteousness begins to be felt. The sinner, with all his trying, cannot make his own robe broad enough nor long enough to cover him. Place it and stretch it as he may, it leaves some part naked; and the more it is drawn upon one point, the more naked others are made. He may not yet think it a "filthy" rag, but he cannot help feeling that it is only a "rag," both in its dimensions and strength; for it tares when it is stretched, and falls off when let alone. This is not more quaintly expressed than it is literally true. We try to establish our own righteousness until we weary or despair of it: and then, did not the Spirit of God turn our attention to Christ, we should give up religion altogether, as a hopeless undertaking, in our own case. It is only by seeing something suitable or encouraging in the Saviour that this is prevented. Religion would be abandoned by every man who had tried hard and failed utterly, did not the Spirit step in at the moment of extremity, and show him something of the person and work of Christ.

"There may be help for me yet, in him who is mighty to save," is the candle which Peradventure holds to Hope, and Hope to Resolution, at this crisis.

Our first cheering views of Christ seldom amount to more than this. It is not at once that the Spirit convinces the soul that Christ is "the end of the law for righteousness;" nor is it exactly in the way we expected, even when he does so. He leads us into all truth now, very much in the same manner as he made the apostles and disciples wise unto salvation, step by step, as we can bear the truth. Every Christian both needs and finds a day of Pentecost, to enlarge, mature, and confirm, his knowledge of justification through faith. Perhaps no one ever understood this grand truth of the gospel at once. Even when it is understood, it can hardly be believed for joy! It seems too good news to be true.

This, I have no doubt, one reason why it is so gradually opened up to the penitent. They must be kept penitent. Their safety must be more

consulted than their comfort, at first. Full submission to the righteousness of Christ, as well as counting all things but loss to be found in it, must be produced, before we are prepared to sing meekly or prudently, "Thou hast covered me with the robes of righteousness and the garments of salvation." No lips ever sung this well, until they had often sighed in the dust of self-abasement, and breathed in fervent prayer, the cry, "Unclean, unclean! God be merciful unto me a sinner."

The Spirit is, however, convincing of righteousness, when he convinces of sin, because of unbelief: for then, our felt need of pardon, and our felt unworthiness of the pardon we need, equally tends to draw and fix our attention upon the question—how can a just and Holy God pardon me? We are not far from being convinced of righteousness, when we are convinced that God, for Christ's sake, can pardon us, without dishonoring his law, or his character. More seals than one or two, of the book of righteousness are opened to us by the Spirit, if we see clearly that God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly, when they believe in Jesus. Any one can say thus: but he who can see its truth in his own case, whilst looking at all his own ungodliness, sees "afar off," and has had the eyes of his understanding enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Can you see "this great sight," after looking at all the greatness of your guilt and unworthiness? Does your eye turn to it, and repose upon it, even with hope, after having read the catalogue of your sins from top to bottom, and seen all the plagues of your heart, and all the weakness of your character? Is this your Goshen of light, when all around you is Egyptian darkness? If so, you may well admire the love of the Spirit, and warrantably believe that he has convinced you of righteousness, in no small or superficial degree.

But, perhaps, your conviction of it does not go all this length yet. You may rather be looking at your own need of a justifying righteousness, than at the sufficiency or freeness of the righteousness of Christ. Well; even in that case, the love of the Spirit towards you, is no doubtful matter. For, who opened and salved thine eyes to see the need of "*white raiment*," to clothe thy naked soul? The time was,—when you did not see that you were naked, or poor, or wretched.

You once took for granted, that you had only to try, in order to be as good as the best; or, at least, as good as could be expected in your case. You expected to look well, and to feel very warm too, in the robe you were manufacturing for yourself. And now you are as much ashamed of your righteousness, as of your unrighteousness; and more afraid of being judged by your good works, than the natural man is of being judged by his evil works.

This is no accident. It is a conviction which even your utter failure, when trying to establish your own righteousness, did not, and could not produce. He is convinced by the Spirit, who is convinced that he himself can do nothing towards his own justification. He is "taught of God," who sees and feels that God must justify him, entirely and freely, if he ever be justified at all. This is not untrue nor doubtful, even if the con-

victed sinner has but a very slender hope, at first, of being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. His deep sense of his need of that "spotless robe," and his strong desire to be clothed with it, are both produced by the power of the Holy Ghost. That power has wrought mightily and graciously in the man, who lies self-condemned and self-emptied at the feet of God, saying nothing but, "Guilty, guilty; vile, vile; unworthy, unworthy:—mercy, mercy! for the sake of Christ!" The Spirit is not exactly his comforter then; but even then, he is as much his friend, and as truly his helper, as when he commanded the angel to "take away the filthy garments" from Joshua, the high priest, and to "clothe him with change of raiment," and to "set a fair mitre upon his head." It is indeed, other work, to humble and empty the soul: but it is the same mighty hand, guided by the same warm heart, that lays the soul down at the foot of the rock of ages, and that lifts it up to the summit, or into the munitions of that rock. The weeping penitent, and the rejoicing saint, are equally the "workmanship" of the Holy Spirit. They are stars, differing from each other, in the degree of grace; but showing equally the glory of the Spirit's love.

You would, of course, prefer such a conviction of righteousness, as would enable you to sing, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." This is a very natural, and not at all an improper desire, after having passed through many painful exercises of mind, by turning over and over the question,—how can I be just with God? It is not wrong, after having thus suffered awhile from the terrors of law, and the sting of conscience, to wish, even very much, to be established, strengthened, and settled in the hope of pardon, and acceptance through the beloved. They have not suffered much yet, from law or conscience, who are not very anxious to "know" that they "have eternal life."

Let us not forget, however, that hope would never have been so very dear to us, had we not suffered a good deal from the want or from the weakness of it. We should have been farther off from "a good hope through grace," than we now are, had we not been led so far down into the valley of humiliation. The Spirit has led and kept us there, not for the sake of paining us, nor yet to try our patience merely; but chiefly, that we might be driven out of all refuges of lies, and even out of sight of them all, until we saw nothing between us and perishing, but just the cross of Christ. For his work, be it for ever remembered, is to "glorify Christ;" and Christ is not fully glorified in us or by us, until he becomes "all in all," in our hope and desire: and that, we do not make him, until we come fully to the point and spirit of the cry, "Lord, save; I perish."

Have you come to this point and spirit often, and yet never been able to lay hold upon "the hope of righteousness by faith?" Are you still, after all your renunciations of your own righteousness, and, after all your prayers to be justified freely by grace, quite uncertain whether you have found mercy to pardon! Is it the case that, whilst you can hardly doubt that you have found "grace to help in time of need," you yet doubt very much whether you are "justified by grace?"

I can sympathise with you, in this uncertainty and suspense. Let us not, however, question the love of the Spirit, even if he has not yet been our comforter in this matter. There may be love in his delay. There is love in delaying comfort, on the question of justification, if the kind of comfort we have been seeking is not promised, or if the promised comfort is looked for from a wrong quarter. The comfortable hope of our justification, can only come from the same source, that our conviction of the need of a justifying righteousness came from. Now that conviction came from the word of God. The Holy Spirit fastened our attention upon the revealed fact, "that, by the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified;" and thus upon the experimental fact, that all our own righteousness is as filthy rags. Thus it was *truth*,—that he plied our understanding and conscience with, in convincing us of our need of justification by grace. He made our belief of this, stand on the word of God. He showed us our guilt, and danger, and weakness, as we had never seen them before: but still, only as they are depicted in the Bible. He did not reveal to us a law, not written there; nor a curse, not threatened there; nor a want, not declared there: he just made us wise up to "what is written" of sinners, and against sinners; and led us to apply that to ourselves.

Well; is it not likely, yea, more than probable, that he comforts, just as he convicts, on the subject,—by the truth! Consider! The facts and promises of the gospel are as able to comfort, as the demands and threatenings of the law to alarm. Why then should not the Spirit speak peace to the conscience by the gospel, as well as terror to the conscience by the law? The glad tidings of the former, are as true as the sad tidings of the latter. The heart can be healed by cheering truth, as well as broken by awful truth.

Has this, however, been the way in which you, "through the Spirit," have "waited for the hope of righteousness by faith?" Have you not rather waited for some impulse—emotion—or inward sense of pardon, apart from the outward, or written promise? Have you not waited *for* the Spirit, rather than *on* the Spirit? Have you "minded the *things* of the Spirit," (which are chiefly his promises and counsels) as much as you have minded his sweet influences, which are the dew of them? Have you sown to the Spirit the good seed of hope and holiness, as well as looked for the early and latter rain of his grace, to make it fruitful?

This is close, almost cross, questioning: but it is wanted. For, how *unlike* the Saviour's own account of the way of bringing home the hope of righteousness to the heart, is the creed—the scheme (what shall I call it?)—the notion of many, who, in other respects, are as willing as Paul or Peter, to be entire debtors to Christ for justification! The whole soul is set upon owing every thing, as to the ground of their acceptance, to his cross; but, as to the knowledge of their acceptance, they seem, somehow, unwilling to be indebted to his word for that; or doubt whether his word be warrant enough, for taking up and cherishing a good hope through grace.

Do, look again, to the Saviour's own account of the process by which the Comforter is promised to

convince of righteousness. "He shall convince of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." John xvi. 10. This refers, unquestionably, to the sufficiency, perfection, and freeness of the righteousness of Christ, to justify all who believe, from all sin. The proof that such a righteousness was needed, lies in the solemn fact, that Christ *came* from the Father, into the world, to magnify the law by his obedience, and to make it honorable by his death; and the proof that his obedience and death did work out a perfect righteousness, lies in the sublime fact, that he was welcomed *back* to the Father by all the armies of heaven, and by the Father,—who was well-pleased for his righteousness' sake! Now "by this fact," Christ says, "shall the Spirit convince of righteousness; or lodge in the mind, such a persuasion of the infinite merits of his work, and of the infinite good-will of the Father, that no new or different revelation of the love of the Father or the Son, can be wanted, (in order to warrant the hope of salvation,) by any one who desires a holy salvation, and is willing to be indebted to Christ for it.

Now, I will not ask, what feeling, impulse, or inward sense, can compare with this outward fact. I durst no more allay your solicitude to feel aright than I dare refrain from calling upon you to judge aright. Whoever has no concern to *feel* hope, peace, and comfort, is not much concerned about his guilt or danger. I want you and myself,—and I avow it, and proclaim it, without apology to theological stoics or worldly maxims,—to feel the good hope of pardon and acceptance: I should, however, only perplex or mortify you, were I to call for such feelings, without reminding you that the facts and promises of the gospel, both create and warrant them. By nothing else does the holy Spirit produce in the heart, love, joy, peace, or any of the peaceful fruits of righteousness. He is too much a comforter—too concerned for our real comfort—and has too much love to the Saviour's glory and our good,—to make impressions on our minds by mysterious impulses, when he can make them, equally well, by plain and glorious truths, which are always at hand to be read, and always easy to be understood.

Besides; he will "glorify" Christ; and not your faith, nor your feelings. You want to have a very high opinion of your own faith—as living—and saving—and of divine "operation:" and he wants you to have a very high opinion of Christ; without whom faith would just be as unequal to your justification, as works. And as the Spirit will "not testify of *himself*," he will not,—depend on it—testify of you, (even to yourself,) that there is any thing in the nature or the degree of your faith, which is any cause of, or claim for, your justification: but he will so shut you up to the fullness, and freeness, and sufficiency of Christ to save, that Christ himself, and not your faith, shall have all the glory; and you, yourself, shall attach no importance to your faith, but just as it thinks of nothing—realizes nothing—rests upon nothing but the doing and dying of Christ.

I will not, therefore, mediate for you, upon the Saviour's reason for the hope of justification. It is before you, as before myself. He returned to the Father and was welcomed by him, as the

grand proof that we may "return, and welcome"—to the Father by him. I, therefore, leave you with the word and the Spirit before you, to ponder and pray over that oracle—"He that believeth is justified:" for the righteousness of God "is *unto* all, and *upon* all, them who believe." Rom. iii. 22.

No. IV.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN RECONCILIATION.

PAUL says, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God:" and it is neither a contradiction nor an exception to this awful truth, that some persons, who make no pretensions to spiritual-mindedness, and others who deny the very being of the Holy Spirit, yet profess a high regard and veneration for God. For, it is not God, as he has revealed himself whom they admire or love; and, therefore, the more they admire and love the character they ascribe to God, the more they hate his real character.

It is not very easy to see this, when men of genius, science, or taste, pay high compliments to the wisdom, power, and benevolence of the Deity—for the same language from the lips of a Christian, would be an expression and a proof of his love to God. How, then, is it a proof of enmity against God, when a mere philosopher, poet, or sentimentalist utters it? God is as wise, as mighty, and as glorious as they say. His eternal power and godhead are to be seen in all the works of creation, which they examine and admire. And they do admire and enjoy what they praise. They are not pretending, when they say, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." How, then, can they be traitors, whilst they utter truth?—Why does revelation class them with the haters of God, seeing they love the works of God, and speak well of the divine perfections displayed in these works? Are they not, at least, less averse, and more reverential to God, than those who study neither the Bible nor nature?

Now there certainly is a difference of *form*, between the enmity of the philosopher to God, and that of the sensualist; and between the enmity of the man of taste, and that of the worldling. The latter are "enemies in their minds by wicked works;" and the former, "by vain and evil imaginations:"—a difference, however, amounting to nothing more, so far as God and eternity are concerned, than that which subsisted, in ancient times, between the idols of savage and civilized nations. The polished Greeks and Romans, who worshipped no idols but such as were cut from Parian marble, with statuesque perfection, were as much idolaters, as the barbarians who bowed down to hideous monsters, and vile reptiles.—"The glory of the incorruptible God" was equally changed, whether, as in Athens and Rome, it was "changed into an image made like unto corruptible man;" or, as in Egypt and Babylon, "unto birds, and beasts, and creeping things." The Jupiter of Rome, and the Juggernaut of India; the Apollo of ancient Greece, and the Thor and Woden of ancient Britain, are equal proofs, that the

men who invented them, and the men who worshipped them, "did not like to retain God in their knowledge;" but were, in fact, equally haters of God."

So it is still. There is as much real enmity to the revealed character of God, in natural and sentimental religion, as in the grossest superstition. The former despises the Bible, or dispenses with it; and the latter neutralizes or makes it void by the traditions of men. Be not misled nor amazed, therefore, when you read or hear high eulogiums upon the Divine Character, from men who reject Divine Truth. That Truth pays all the homage, they can do, to God as a Creator: and, therefore, they must dislike the homage it pays to him, as a lawgiver, and as the God of Salvation. For, they cannot pretend, (at least they cannot prove,) that the Bible does less justice to the glories of creation, than philosophy. They have produced no poetry yet, that rivals, in natural beauty or sublimity, the psalms and hymns of inspiration. In rejecting the Bible, therefore, their reason cannot be found in the spirit or the style, in which it celebrates the natural perfections of Deity. Indeed, by their own confession, nothing is so lofty in sentiment or language as sacred poetry.

We thus get at the real cause of their unbelief: it is enmity against the *moral* perfections of God, as these are revealed in the Bible. How inveterate then is the enmity of the human heart, seeing it can admire the divine goodness in nature, and hate it in grace: trace it in creation with enthusiasm, and trample on it in redemption, with contempt: laud it in a star, and laugh at it in the "Sun of Righteousness!"

This is fallen human nature, when it raises itself highest, without the gospel. It merely refines its enmity, and systematizes its pride. No wonder, therefore, if the gospel pour as much scorn upon human wisdom, as upon human crime. Both hate God alike, although for different reasons.

Thus the necessity of reconciliation to God is universal. And as the best forms of the human mind are, by nature and tendency, the *proudest*, no wonder that reconciliation is always by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well as by the blood of the Cross. "The Ministry of Reconciliation" succeeds in its *Beseechings*, because it is "the ministrations of the Spirit."

It will increase your love to the Spirit, to trace the love of the Spirit, in reconciling you to God, by the Cross. Now, by it, he has reconciled you to the incomprehensible *mysteries* of the divine essence. You do not cavil with them, nor turn them into excuses for neglecting the divine will. This is done, however, by many. They entrench themselves amongst the mysteries of the trinity, when they are plied with the claims of the gospel; and demand explanations of the twofold nature of Christ, when they are blamed for unbelief. They wield all the "things hard to be understood," against both "the one thing needful," and the things which belong to their eternal peace; and because they cannot comprehend, refuse to obey.

Mystery is not, indeed, the sole, nor the real reason of their aversion to the gospel. That lies deeper than they choose to acknowledge. It is no calumny to say so: for there is nothing in the

trinity of the Godhead, merely as trinity, to provoke or offend, however it may baffle. The mind does not, indeed, like to be baffled: but then, it does not escape from this mortification, by taking up with the absolute unity of God. The incomprehensible prevails in that, to a degree which, if as much dwelt upon, would be equally baffling.—What offends, therefore, is not the mystery of the trinity, as mere mystery; but the redemption involved in the fact. Accordingly, the Unitarian always discards redemption from his theory of the divine nature and government. He rids himself of more than mystery by rejecting the trinity. He throws off, along with that, the fear of perishing, the need of a mediator, and the use of a sanctifier.

Why have you not done so? You do not comprehend the trinity you believe: but it does not offend you. You can both say and sing,

"I love the incarnate mystery!"

Why? Because there—you can put your "trust." It is the *trust-worthiness* of the Lamb of God, which reconciles you to the trinity of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit has thus shown you the need of a salvation, which no theory of Unitarianism furnishes; and satisfied you that Trinitarianism alone, provides for the wants of your soul.

This is from the love of the Spirit! Had he not convinced you of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, you too might have rejected the gospel, under the pretence of its mysteriousness. Many are left to do so: and, who can wonder?—They will not take the *word* of the Spirit, upon the subject of their sin or danger; and, therefore, he will not *work* for their conversion. They will not take truth just as he has written it; and he will not do that for them, which they can do for themselves.

Observe, now, how the Holy Spirit has reconciled you, by the Cross, to the *sovereignty* of the divine will. Nothing, perhaps, is more appalling or repulsive to the natural mind, than the idea of being entirely and eternally at the disposal of the mere will of God! The heart rises and writhes at such absolute dependence. It would shake it off, if it could. To have no claim to be saved, and no vote or voice, but the voice of begging prayer, in the matter of our own salvation, is a galling chain to the spirit of man. Nothing but the power of the Spirit of God could reconcile any man to this chain. But that power does reconcile to it! When we are convinced of the evil of sin, we are soon convinced that God is not necessarily bound to pardon it, and that he would not be unjust, even if he refused to pardon it. This is both felt and confessed, whenever the evil of sin is thoroughly brought home to the conscience.—Then, our difficulty is, to see how God can do any thing else than allow the law to take its course against us. We have not only nothing to say for ourselves, in bar of its sentence; but we are even afraid to plead the death of Christ against the curse; because we feel that we deserve condemnation, quite as much for our sins, against Christ, as for our sins against law. And there is no pretence in all this! We do not aggravate our guilt or danger, in order to conciliate God by an excess

of humility. We do not take the worst view of our case, in the hope of inducing God to take the best view of it. We are not bribing mercy, when we declare our utter unworthiness of any mercy. No; whatever homage the self-condemnation of a penitent pays to the majesty of law or justice, is disinterested. It is the honest verdict of conscience, and in nowise a stratagem to evade punishment.

So it is also in the submission of a real penitent, to the sovereignty of divine grace. His professed submission to the good will of God, is not a clever nor covert plan of *making* that will *good* in his own case. He knows that he cannot force God to save him—nor bribe God—nor circumvent God, in the matter of salvation. All that he knows, even when he thinks most, is, that self-condemnation is a becoming spirit on the part of a sinner, and the only spirit at all likely to find mercy. All that he hopes, when he hopes most, at this stage of his experience, is, that his sense of utter unworthiness may be the work of the Holy Spirit, shutting him up to the worthiness of the Lamb slain. Accordingly, he casts himself simply upon the good will of God. He is reconciled to have no other warrant for hoping in Christ. He may wish for some clue to the divine will—for some sign or token of eventual success: but he lies down at the foot of the cross without them, leaving the issue in the hands of God.

It is no objection against the simplicity or disinterestedness of this submission to the divine will, that the penitent would not be thus meek, if he thought that the issue would be *against* him. God has not called on him to think so. The Holy Spirit does not work on the heart, to reconcile the heart to condemnation, or to the loss of the soul. He convinces, only in order to save the soul; and, therefore, it is no part of a penitent's duty, and no part of a penitential spirit, to be willing to perish. It is a sin, to despair. It cannot, therefore, be a virtue, nor a mark of grace, to be *willing* to be lost.

This is so obvious, that I know not how to explain the conduct of those, who make "willingness to be lost," the test of real humility. True; they qualify the requirement of such humility by adding, "if it would be for the glory of God, that you should perish." I do hope that we misunderstand those who speak thus! They must, surely, mean less than their words imply. The loss of a soul can bring no glory to God. He has "no pleasure in the death of a sinner." Judgment is his strange work: and, therefore, although God will be perfectly just in the condemnation of the impenitent, he will never consider himself glorified by it. Goodness is the glory of God! Accordingly, when Moses requested to see his glory, he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee."

But I will not argue this point; for I cannot believe we understand the *local* meaning of the unscriptural expression I refer to.

Observe now, how the Holy Spirit has reconciled you, by the cross, to the *exclusiveness* of the divine plan of saving sinners. He has, indeed, taught you nothing upon this subject, but just what is written. What is written, is however, very obnoxious to the natural mind. It is,—that

there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus. It is,—that other foundation (of hope) can no man lay, than that is laid; even Christ. Now the utmost that unrenewed nature will cordially allow, is, that this may be *one* way of salvation, and a very good way for those who like it. But, that it is the *only* way of getting to heaven, is denied by more than one half of those who have the Bible in their hands. The popular maxim is, that there are as many ways to heaven, as there are roads to London; and all equally safe, if the travellers are only sincere.

This is said, indeed, good-humoredly; but it is a malignant sarcasm upon the character of God, and a bitter reflection upon his word. Accordingly the good humor with which it is uttered in company, soon gives place to anger or scorn, when the maxim is flatly denied. Then, it comes out, both by words and looks, that a God who would only save in one way is not at all to the taste of the majority. They hate "such strictness!"

I speak of this maxim, not, of course, as it is applied to the forms or discipline of churches, (but as it is extended to all creeds, and no creed. It is perfectly true, that there are as many ways to heaven as there are churches,) in which Christ is made "all in all" in salvation. The difference of their government, does not hinder the Holy Spirit from blessing the preaching of the cross; and, therefore, it cannot prevent the "crown of glory." But this is not true of all creeds. It is not true of any creed, in which the cross is not the only refuge of the guilty, and grace the only principle of piety. It is false, if the Bible be true. But how popular is this maxim, amongst those who do not think, and amongst those who plume themselves upon thinking freely and liberally! And you and I have been saved from it by the teaching of the Spirit! We are glad to be "shut up" to Christ, for all our hope. Well we may!

And now observe, how the Holy Spirit has reconciled you, by the cross, to the revealed *character* of God. The substance of that character is, that "God is love." And yet, strange to say, this is the chief reason, why the natural mind is enmity against God. It hates his love far more than his holiness. And for an obvious reason: the real love of God is paternal; and thus is seen to claim the heart: it is redeeming love; and thus is seen to be humbling: it is sovereign love; and thus is seen to be unmeritable. Were it love that asked for little return of affection, and accepted of still less obedience, men would, perhaps, be rather pleased with it than otherwise; but claiming, as it does their supreme love, and their immediate confidence, they hate it because it leaves them without excuse. They can question authority and cavil at justice, under the pretence of strictness or severity: but they cannot resist love, but by resenting it as needless or humiliating.

Why else are sublime and lofty ideas of God, so much more popular in the world, than gentle and lovely ideas of his character? O, it is not from nobility of mind, nor from refinement of taste, that the grand is preferred to the gracious, and the sublime to the tender. The former let the heart alone—let the conscience alone—let their sins alone. The majestic and magnificent play around!

the head and amuse the imagination : but the fact that God is love, cannot be trifled with, and, therefore, it is hated.

Whilst, therefore, I admire the grace of the Spirit, in reconciling the heart to the strictness of divine justice, and to the scrutiny of divine omniscience, and to the glory of divine holiness, I adore it for reconciling the heart to the fulness of divine love—because that is so full of claims upon our affections, and confidence, and obedience. It brings all duty with it, in irresistible forms. It makes all sin appear as ungrateful, as criminal. It places us so, that the bare idea of refusing any part of the divine will, becomes monstrous, as well as base. Accordingly, Paul says, “Hope maketh not ashamed,” when “the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.” Then it begets the love which is “the fulfilling of the law ;” and thus leaves us to act on David’s principle, “I shall not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy precepts.”

And, now, observe how the Holy Spirit has reconciled you, by the cross, to the dispensations of Providence. Our reconciliation to God is not complete, even when we are both quite willing and thankful to be entire debtors to Christ and grace for all our salvation. Indeed, we are not a little inclined to calculate, that surely Providence will not press very hard upon our patience, when our faith is thus cordially given to the Saviour. We lay our account with having some trials in the world, but take for granted that they will not be many nor mysterious. They turn out, however, to be of a kind, or in a degree, we did not expect : and then the Holy Spirit has to begin the work of reconciliation anew. For it is no uncommon thing to be so unhinged by worldly reverses or disappointments, that the very form as well as spirit of piety goes to wreck for a time.

It is all very well, for it is very true, to say that the path of the just, like the light, “shineth more and more, to the perfect day.” Those, however, who think before they speak, and whilst speaking, say this, remembering that the sun is often clouded, and sometimes totally eclipsed. And the clouds of calamity, owing to the weakness of our faith, and from our proneness to walk by sense, can so hide the wisdom of Providence, that we soon lose sight of both the work and worth of grace for a time. It is not, in general, the first heavy pressure of “the mighty hand of God,” which we bear humbly, or interpret fairly. We are but too ready to judge of his heart by his hand ; and thus our own hearts rebel or murmur against him, until we seem, even to ourselves, to have no submission to his will.

This is the state of mind which the Spirit has to subdue. We have not only to be reconciled to the crosses we groan under, but also to the cross of Christ, which permits them, and to the government of God, which appoints them.

How many will join me in wondering and adoring, that the love of the Spirit has reconciled us to privations and sorrows, which, at first, seemed to harden our hearts against God, and to alienate them from the Saviour, and to make them reckless of eternal consequences ! Our troubles would have done all this, had not the Spirit lifted up a standard in the midst of them, which claimed us.

No. V.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN ADOPTION.

It does not at all lessen our admiration of the love of Christ in redemption that God “*sent Him forth*” to redeem them who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. He was sent forth by the Father ; but he also “*came forth*” as willingly as the Father sent him. The fulness of time could scarcely be heard, when saying, “Go,” so promptly, cheerfully, and loudly, did he say, “Lo, I come ; I delight to do thy will, O my God.” Psa. xl.

Well ; just in the same way the love of the Spirit, in adoption, is brought before us. He, too, was “sent forth ;” not, indeed, to adopt or redeem children to God ; but to regenerate all the adopted, and to sanctify all the redeemed family of God. And to do this, the Eternal Spirit came forth, at his pentecostal fulness of time, as promptly and willingly as the Father sent him or as Christ came at the fulness of his mediatorial time.

Very different, indeed, was the kind of work which the Father gave them to do in the world. The Spirit had not, like the Son, to come forth in the likeness of man, nor in the form of a servant, nor at all in the capacity of a sufferer. No manger, with its privations ; no Gethsemane, with its cup of wrath ; no Calvary, with its cross, awaited his advent. Humiliation, agony, and death, were the tests and trials of the love of Christ alone. Only his heart bled or broke for the redemption of the adopted. “In bringing many sons to glory,” Christ alone had to be made “perfect through suffering.”

This creates a distinction all but infinite between the work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. It does not, however, create such a wide distinction between their *love* as there is between their *work* ; nor such a marked distinction as to forbid the mention of the love of the Spirit when the love of Christ is celebrated : for, there is no more danger of detracting from, or of hiding, the love of the Saviour, by exhibiting the love of the Spirit, than by exhibiting the love of the Father ; except, indeed, the exhibition be unfair, or disproportionate, or designing.

It must, however, be confessed, and should never be forgotten, that the love of God has been exalted and exaggerated, by some writers, for the express purpose of hiding all the glorious peculiarities of both the love and work of Christ. Such love is ascribed, by modern Socinians, to the Father, as would, if true, render the atonement unnecessary, and the love of Christ but human. And we have lately seen the *gifts* of the Spirit exalted above the preaching of the cross, even when nothing beyond “unknown tongues” was pretended to. It is, therefore, possible to have a sinister purpose in emblazoning the love of the Spirit. It may be employed sometimes, as the love of God has been already, to eclipse the glory and grace of the Saviour. Indeed, the *light* of the Spirit is, at present, made of more importance by some, than the death of Christ and the word of God. I, therefore, write, and would have you read and judge, with a jealousy equally scrupulous and scrutinizing. I have taken my place, in stu-

dying this subject, in the very centre of "the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths," of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that thus I may ascribe nothing to the Spirit which belongs to Christ; nor so present what belongs to the Spirit as to hide any of the wonders of redeeming love.

On the other hand, however, equal care ought to be taken that we neither overlook nor under-rate any part of the work of the Spirit, or of the wondrous love which distinguishes his operations. Now, in regard to adoption, all the children of God are "born again of the Spirit," "led by the Spirit," and "sealed by the Spirit." In like manner, all their knowledge and enjoyment of their adoption comes from his witness to its truth. Hence Paul says, "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Rom. viii. 16. For these and similar reasons, the Comforter is expressly and emphatically called "the Spirit of Adoption."

With such facts before us, there can be neither danger nor difficulty in tracing, even minutely, the love of the Spirit, as that is manifested in connection with adoption. It shines brightly even in the preliminary step of convincing us that our natural relationship to God, as "the Father of our spirits," is not sonship. We are all, indeed, by creation, "his offspring." Yes; and, by nature, we should all trust to that, as enough for safety. So prone is the human mind to rest satisfied with mere natural and nominal relations to God, that the Jews reckoned themselves the children of God because they were the "seed of Abraham," and although this presumptuous fallacy was met and unmasked by the startling oracle, "God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham," many have taught, and more believed, even in the face of John the Baptist's protest, that baptism makes an infant a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

We may never have attached any such importance to our baptism, nor founded any claim or hope upon our baptism from pious parents: but the time was when we took for granted that we needed no nearer relationship to God than our birth in a Christian land gave us. When we spoke of God, it was as our maker chiefly, if not only. We addressed him, indeed, as "our Father," when we repeated the Lord's prayer; but we thought of him only as our creator and preserver; and never dreamt, that he who made us could have "no mercy upon us," apart from redeeming us from the curse of the law by the death of his Son.

This delusion did not end with our childhood.—It would never have ended by age or experience, had not the Holy Spirit convinced us, that "we were by nature the children of wrath, as well as others." Eph. ii. 3. This conviction is his work upon the soul, wherever it is an humbling conviction. And what but love,—even great love,—could have induced him to implant it in any soul? For no truth, perhaps, is more hateful to the natural mind; it exasperates, as well as mortifies, our pride. Oh, it was "a night much to be remembered before the Lord," when we first applied this humbling truth to ourselves, and said of ourselves, "We are the children of wrath as well as others!"

There was more than our Bible with us in our closet then:—"Verily, God was in that place," whether we knew it, or not, at the time. We, indeed, were reading, or praying, or pondering; but it was the Spirit, working mightily, who unveiled to us the solemn fact, that we were both aliens and outcasts from the special family of God.—Thus, it is owing to the love of the Spirit that we came to know, so as to feel and confess, the necessity of being "born again," before we could be the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

It will be easy and delightful now to trace the love of the Holy Spirit, in creating the desire to be the children of God. Did you ever observe how that desire arises in the mind of a penitent? It is not the first wish of a broken and contrite spirit.

"Call me a child of thine!"

is not the first prayer which springs from the heart to the lips, when we feel ourselves to be children of wrath by nature. Penitents, in general, adopt instinctively the prayer of the prodigal, "Make me as one of thy hired servants, for I am no more worthy to be called thy son."

You remember that you would have been content, yea, well pleased, to be restored to the favor of God, in any capacity, or relation, which would have placed your soul in safety. To be on the right hand, at the judgment-seat, however far off from the spot where crowns of glory were falling: to be in heaven for ever, however obscure or unnoticed, would have more than satisfied your soul, at first. You could not see then, how God could "put you among the children, and give you a goodly heritage," in the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, and whose mansions are near the throne. You would have counted it "joy unspeakable and full of glory" for you, to have had the prospect of serving the servants of God, by carrying their harps after them on the sea of glass, or by helping them to cast their crowns at the feet of the Lamb. You thought of no crown nor harp for yourself; but felt, that you could adore the Lamb for ever without either, if only permitted to be where he is.

Now there was real humility in all this: but it was not so wise, as it was well-meant, nor so very humble as it seems. For, as this is not the form in which eternal life is promised or presented to any one by the gospel, so it is not a form in which it should be sought or desired, by any one. It is, remember, "many sons," or only as children, that God will bring to glory. Heb. ii. 10. Accordingly, the Holy Spirit did not allow your hopes or desires to rest satisfied with the bare prospect of just escaping hell, and entering heaven at last.—He led them out, however gradually, to seek for an interest in the great atonement—for the regenerating power of grace—for conformity to the divine image; and thus led them on to embrace the prospects of the gospel, as well as the promises of it; and to lay hold of eternal life, just as Christ has revealed it.

Do you not see the love of the Spirit in this? Consider; had you been left to take up with the mere hope of escaping hell, or of being merely "a

hired servant," in your father's house, you would soon have relaxed in prayer to God, and in dependence on Christ. There is, alas, but too little of both maintained, even when a hope full of immortality is taken up: and there would be still less, if less than "the glory to be revealed" were permitted to become the final object of desire or pursuit.

Besides; it is of immense importance, yea, absolutely necessary, to be led on to the desire of full adoption into the family of God. Willingness to be a servant is all very well, as a feeling; but as a principle, it does not, and cannot, produce either the kind or the degree of service which God requires. Indeed, when it is thoroughly sifted, as a principle, it will be found somewhat unholy as well as slothful. Our hearts, remember, are very deceitful, and quite capable of preferring that relationship to God, which involves the fewest sacrifices, and the least serving. It is, therefore, just as possible to hold back from embracing the hope of sonship, in order to avoid the duties of children, as to keep back from the sacrament, in order to stand clear of its peculiar moral obligations and responsibilities. More is expected from children than from servants, in life: and in godliness, this is soon discovered to be still more true. O, it is well that the Comforter is "the Spirit of adoption!" By this, he proves himself to be the Spirit of sanctification and holiness. For it is sonship alone, that is seen and felt to call for filial, cheerful, and impartial obedience. It is the duty of being "followers of God as dear children," that explains and enforces "following the Lord fully."

Consider now the love of the Spirit in fixing and exercising the mind of penitents, with God's solemn question,—“How shall I put thee amongst the children?” Jer. iii. 29. It is a remarkable fact, that all the truly penitent, however intent upon escaping the wrath to come, are yet deeply concerned for the *honor* of God in their salvation. I mean, that they wish to see how a holy and just God can, consistently, save them. Their chief difficulty lies here.

This is not what might naturally be expected from a sinner, when he is shrinking from “a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.” Then, it might be supposed, that he would care for nothing but his own safety—that he would catch at any hope of escape, without one thought about the glory of God—that he would count any kind of salvation, in any way, enough for him. But a penitent does not. The louder he cries, “Who can dwell with devouring fire and everlasting burnings?” the oftener he asks, “How can man be just with God?” The more he feels his danger, the more he wishes to be honorably delivered from the wrath to come.

There is more in this concern for the honor and consistency of God, than can be explained fully by the fact, that we know him too well to suppose that he could show mercy at the expense of law or justice. This consideration has, of course, no small influence upon us. It ought to have much. But still, there is more in this state of mind, than the conviction that God must act in character, or in harmony with all the perfections of his nature, and principles of his government. There is, also,

an anxious and honest desire to see God just, in justifying: to see God glorified, in saving. Accordingly, until something of this is seen, no penitent ventures to answer God's question,—“How can I put thee amongst the children?”

This, however, is just the question, for drawing us to search the Scriptures, that we may ascertain whether there be any way in which God can be merciful to us, without injury to his character. And is not the love of the Spirit illustrious, in thus throwing us upon an inquiry, that throws us directly upon the gospel? Were our great question only—how shall I become better, or how shall I resist temptation in future? we might, and most likely should, stop short of the cross of Christ, and think only of our need of some divine help. But the question—how can I become an adopted, accepted, and beloved child of God? cannot be answered by any prospect of mere *help*, however great. It is unanswerable, until we discover that for this very purpose, or that we might be “dear children,” Christ both died and rose again. How wise and kind it is, therefore, to fix and exercise our hopes and fears, with a point upon which we can obtain no real satisfaction, but by finding out from the word of God, that he sent his Son to redeem them who were under the law, just “that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Gal. iv. 5. Truly, the Spirit is often a Comforter, when we do not think him so. Yes; his work is often in tender love, when we suspect him of desertion or denial. We, no doubt, thought, when turning over and over in our minds, the absorbing inquiry, “Am I a child of God—shall I ever be one of his family?”—that it was very trying, and somewhat strange, that we could come to no settled conclusion! But see now—what love regulated all the work of the Spirit, in this apparent “standing afar off.” He was thus taking care, that we should come near enough to the cross, by the Scriptures, to see in it, and for ourselves, that the great sacrifice which made mercy free, made adoption equally free; that the blood which cleanseth from all sin, cancels all unworthiness, and gives power, right, and welcome, to all who receive Christ crucified, to regard themselves as the children of God.

There is much of the love of the Spirit manifested, in thus shutting up penitents “to the faith” of the gospel, for the relief of their anxieties about sonship. No direct witness of the Spirit with their own spirit could, under ordinary circumstances, do them so much good. It might be more agreeable to us, to have a sense of sonship, or the consciousness of adoption, borne in upon our minds by an impulse; but it would neither be so profitable or safe. We should be in no small danger of attaching more value to it, than to the cross; and in great danger of making less use of our Bibles. The Holy Spirit, therefore, does not give a *sense* of any thing, which would set aside or lessen the necessity of “a life of faith” on the son of God. He witnesses to no *sonship*, but what is drawn from the cross, and held at the cross, by humble and prayerful faith. Accordingly, even those cloudless and glorious discoveries of sonship which hallow and enshrine the death-bed of some saints, are, most likely,—indeed certainly,—all made through the medium of their former experi-

mental knowledge of the grace and power of Christ ; then, gathered into one full-orbed sight of the Lamb slain ! I mean,—that the Spirit's witness then, is not to their worth, but to the worthiness of the Lamb. It seals, or accredits, of course, their sincerity as the followers of the Lamb—but it shines from the Sun of Righteousness himself. Yes ; the life of faith is at its height, when even the holiest Christians are dying, whether in triumph or tranquillity.

The witness of the Holy Spirit with the spirits of the children of God, to their adoption, is, confessedly, a difficult subject. One thing, however, is certain,—and sheds great light upon both his love and witness,—that he does not witness *against* the testimony of our own spirits, but *with* it. When our own heart or conscience condemns us for known sin, or for heartless prayer—or for allowed inconsistencies—or for the indulgence of unhallowed tempers and worldly-mindedness,—the Holy Spirit is too holy ; yes, and loves us too well, to shine upon our souls. He bears witness to our adoption, only when our own spirit witnesses that we are honestly trying to walk worthy of our high calling. When we cease to conduct ourselves as the children of God, the Comforter ceases to act as the Spirit of adoption, until we return to filial obedience and submission.

This is *real* love to us. For if we could retain the sense of sonship, after having lost the spirit of prayer ; or could we carry the hope of adoption, into the paths of backsliding, without dimming it, we should soon become prayerless, if not apostate.

So far, the rule of the Spirit's witness is as plain, as it is wise and holy. There are, however, not a few very exemplary Christians, whose own spirits bear them witness, that they are trying to walk with God, and to lean entirely upon Christ, and to act as children ; and yet they say, that they are "utter strangers to the spirit of adoption." Now, what shall I say to this ? Few, perhaps, have seen oftener, or corresponded more with this class, than myself. None can tell the dilemmas I have been placed in, by cases of this kind, when I have had to answer startling questions, upon the spur of the moment, to the victims of depression and despondency :—a class more numerous than many suppose, and more tempted than I suspected. Often (and that just in order to throw their thoughts into a new channel, and thus to gain a hearing) have I been compelled, whilst my heart was bleeding with sympathy, to ask with a smile, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up to heaven" for the spirit of adoption, without gazing on your Bibles, at the same time, for the *law* of adoption ! How can you expect the Spirit to witness to your sonship, if you will not "hear what the Spirit saith" to them who have fled to Christ ! That is,—that to as many as have received Christ, or believed on his name, he gives power to become (or empowers them to consider themselves) the children of God. Here is the revealed and written fact, that all who believe with the heart, are warranted and welcome to regard themselves as "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ ;" and, if you refuse to take the *word* of the Spirit for this fact, how can you expect him to witness with your spirit ! Why ; were you to

reason in other things, as you do in this matter, you would render your Bible of no use. But you take the word of the Spirit, for the fact of your sin, your danger, your weakness, and your dependence ; why not, then, for your adoption ! It is just as true, that the penitents are all the children of God by grace, as that the impenitent are all the children of wrath by nature. You are just as welcome to consider yourself a child of God, as you are willing to be a debtor to Christ and a servant to God. Yes ; willing servants (made so by the cross) are welcome sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

No. VI.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN ILLUMINATION.

It is by far too common to confine the expression, "After ye were illuminated,"—to the first entrance of divine light into the mind. That, indeed, is illumination, as contrasted with the former blindness of the mind, just as the dawn is light, compared with darkness ; but it no more amounts to the illumination of the Spirit, than the first faint streaks of the morning, to daylight. It is spiritual light ; but not spiritual illumination ; for although these are the same in kind, they differ as much in degree, as the second power of vision given to the blind man at Bethsaida. He saw, after the first touch of the Saviour's hand : but he only saw "men, as trees, walking." It was when Jesus "put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up," that he was "restored, and saw every man clearly." Mark viii. 24.

Whilst, therefore, it becomes us to say, from the very first entrance of the feeblest rays of divine light, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see," it is very unwise to call this illumination. It is a change "from darkness to light ;" but not a translation "out of darkness into marvellous light ;" for when he who commanded the light of the day to shine out of the darkness of chaos, *shines* into the mind, he gives "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus ;" and that is not, usually, the first, nor the clearest discovery of a newly enlightened mind. Accordingly, in general, our first spiritual views of God are somewhat alarming. It is his glory, not in "the face of Jesus," but rather in the face of the law, or of the judgment-seat, or of eternity, that we see then. Hence we say then, like Isaiah, "Wo is me ; for I am undone, for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts." Isa. vi. 5. Or, with Job, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee : wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job xlii. 5, 6.

This self-abasement, and this self-condemnation, are indeed felt, even more deeply, although less painfully, when the mind discovers the glory of God in the face of Jesus, or sees how "God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Nothing melts or humbles like "this great sight." No whirlwind, earthquake, or fire of conviction, brings the mantle of godly sorrow so fully or closely over

the face, as the small still voice of a reconciling God. That produces just the effect, and all the effect, foretold in prophecy,—Thou shalt “remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.” Ezek. xvi. 63.

This is illumination! Our awful views of God, as holy and just, were light: but this is “marvellous light;” sustaining all the majesty of his holiness and justice, and yet softening and enshrining both, with pardoning mercy and paternal love. And until God is seen somewhat in this lovely light, we are not illuminated so, that, like the Hebrews, we could “endure a great fight of afflictions,” or even be calculated upon for steadfastness in the faith. It is the illumination of the Spirit, not the dawn of his light, that produces well-doing and enduring Christians.

This distinction between some light, and considerable illumination, will go far in explaining that sad oversight of the love of the Spirit, which is so common amongst many, who are certainly not strangers to the work of the Spirit. They think nothing love, but comfort; nothing sympathy, but consolation: and, as they are uncomfortable, they are ready to conclude that they are unconverted, and thus not loved by the Spirit at all. This conclusion is often drawn by the weary and heavy laden, who, although seeking rest to their souls, cannot find any “quiet rest;” and it would be oftener drawn, were they not glad to cling to any thing, which was any proof or token that they are not given up to a reprobate mind. It is their dread of being rejected, or “let alone,” by God entirely, that makes them so willing to hear the best construction put upon their fears and distress. These are not removed, nor much relieved, but they are alleviated, by the kind interpretations, which ministers and pious friends give of such symptoms. It is something, and that something is not a little to a trembling conscience, or a sinking heart, to be told kindly—that “God would not have showed you such things, had he intended no mercy;—you would not feel as you do if God had given you up;—a reprobate mind is a reckless mind; a seared conscience is past feeling. But this is not your case; you are in a far more hopeful state now that you are afraid to hope, than you were whilst you had no fears.”

There is not, indeed, much of the gospel in all this; but still it is “a word in season to the weary,” which often enables them to “look again” to the gospel, or inclines them to try again to find peace. In like manner, they are somewhat encouraged, although not exactly comforted, when ministers or friends reason with them “out of the Scriptures,” showing, from the case of the Ephesians, that there is not only love, but “great love,” manifested in quickening a sinner from spiritual death. “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” Eph. ii. 4, 5.

It is not common to quote, as I have done, the words, “together with Christ;” much less to add the words which follow, “and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Verse 6. All this is

usually omitted, when reasoning, with the timid and trembling, from the fact of their quickening, to the fact of God’s love to their souls; omitted, however, not treacherously nor heedlessly, but in tenderness to their feelings, and in the hope that spiritual life may soon be followed by spiritual joy. These two things are often separate for a time, in point of fact; and, therefore, it is not altogether unfair to separate them in argument, when the purpose is both kind and pure. It is, however, unwise, however well meant. It defeats itself, whenever the trembling penitent retires to weigh the argument, by reading the passage. Then he sees, that the quickening, which (he was told) was a proof of the great love of God, includes spiritual resurrection, and is connected with some spiritual exaltation, which he does not even understand the meaning of. Thus, he finds no parallel between himself and the Ephesians, except that he, like them, is no longer “dead in trespasses and sins.” Unless, therefore, he know of something in the gospel itself to encourage him, or recollect some case more parallel to his own, he is then in danger of being more discouraged than ever by the case of the Ephesian converts.

Besides; the Holy Spirit is generally spoken of as a comforter; and, therefore, it is no great wonder if those who are very uncomfortable suspect very much that the Spirit has no love to them. They are wrong—sadly wrong, in thus suspecting the heart or the hand of the all-gracious Spirit: for, as “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” he must give death-wounds to the love of sin, and to the pride of the heart, and to the power of self-righteousness. It would be no less to wound them but slightly; and no wisdom to comfort the wounded spirit by the number or the depth of its bleeding convictions. It is not the *begun* work of the Holy Spirit on the heart, but the *finished* work of Christ on the cross, that gives real comfort then.

Were this distinction well understood, both the comfort and the illumination of penitents would advance faster than they usually do. Their personal piety also, would make more progress: for it, too, is much impeded by trying to graft the hope of salvation upon the depths of conviction. Happily, that unwise process of comforting the awakened, defeats itself in the end. It is, however, very injurious, whilst it succeeds; for the moment a penitent takes up with the maxim, that his convictions are sure to end in conversion, there is an end to much of his diligence, and to more of his watchfulness. Little do they know what they are doing, who, in their sympathy with the convicted, comfort them by their convictions. This is stopping their flight from the wrath to come! Accordingly, it is not very uncommon to find persons whose experience and hope amount to nothing beyond the single fact, that, at one time in their life, they had very strong convictions, which were very like the work of the Spirit. Their alarm and melting did not, however, lead to any consecration to Christ or holiness; but merely to a lazy hanging on upon the outward means of grace, with some vague hope that what they once felt would turn out, at last, to be a work of grace, as a matter of course.

This is a fearful delusion! There is even infatuation in it. No man, in his senses, would treat

bodily danger in this way. He would consider himself trifled with, if not insulted, were any one to say to him, "Your deep sense of pain and danger is a very good sign: all who have ever recovered from your malady felt exactly as you do; and therefore your pain will, no doubt, give place to ease in course of time." Every man would interrupt this reasoning by asking, what *cured* those who recovered? Not the course of time, without any course of medical treatment.

Why is not common sense applied as promptly to detect and reject the fallacy of taking for granted that pain of conscience will be followed eventually by peace of conscience? Mental pain, like bodily, in some cases, is certainly a good sign. It is a proof that *mortification* has not taken place; but it is not the physician nor the remedy. Whilst, therefore, I would readily say to any trembling sinner,—Your distress, and fears, and anxieties, are proofs that God has not given you up to a reprobate mind, and proofs that the Holy Spirit is making you feel your need of a Saviour; still, I would always add,—they are not proofs of your election, nor pledges of your final safety. All their value depends on what they lead to. If you do not follow them out by fleeing from the wrath to come, they may prove the forerunners of that wrath. If you rest in them, instead of applying at once and fully to Christ, they may turn out to be the first gnawings of "the worm that dieth not;" the first sparks of the "unquenchable fire!"

You see now, I hope, the difference between light and illumination. I say "difference," because there is more than a distinction between them. And it is of immense importance to remember this fact: for thousands, by forgetting it, settle down into idle waiting for more grace, under the rash presumption that the fear of perishing is the pledge of eventual salvation. Thus, instead of fleeing from the wrath to come by actually and immediately applying to Christ, they turn their momentary fear of that wrath into a reason for hoping to escape it.

Again I say, I attach great importance to convictions of sin and danger: but still I must repeat that he is not illuminated, nor much enlightened, who can be satisfied with having felt them deeply for a time. Indeed, convictions which can find sufficient relief in their own depth or sincerity, cannot be very deep. A deep fear of perishing would compel flight, for refuge, to the hope set before us in the gospel.

How some new light upon the evil and danger of sin can be set down as saving grace, I can only explain by the deceitfulness of the heart. All the Bible illustrates and proves, that light upon this subject is intended to lead to Christ. Accordingly, when Paul prayed for the quickened Ephesians, that the eyes of their "understanding might be enlightened," his object was, that they might know "the hope of God's calling." Eph. i. 18. And it is not safe to call any light divine illumination, which permits us to stop short of that hope, or to hope merely because we have feared. We are not thoroughly in earnest about our souls, if any impression made upon them (whether painful or pleasing) is turned into an excuse or a reason for not pressing to an issue the question of their salvation.

You are now prepared to consider how much love the Spirit manifests in standing "afar off" as a comforter, from all who try to take comfort from his work, instead of seeking for it in the finished work of Christ. For, were all fears, and all convictions, and all arrests of conscience, really his work, he will not witness to them, as being "the good work" of grace on the heart, until they are employed as reasons and motives for trusting the soul to the great work of Christ on the cross. He will not only stand aloof from comforting those who take up with their own feelings instead of Christ; but he will leave these feelings to subside, perhaps to vanish away so completely, that the heart shall become harder than it was before its first meltings.

There is wonderful love in this, however it may seem anger at the time. There is indeed, anger in it too; but it is the paternal anger which chastens sharply, because paternal love is strong. For, were we allowed to comfort ourselves with the hope of salvation just because certain feelings prevailed in us at one time, we should soon under-rate Christ as much as Legalists do, and neglect holiness as much as Antinomians do.

I have dwelt much upon this point, too long, perhaps; but I have done so, that you may dread and hate the bare idea of resting satisfied with any light, which does not bring you into thorough subjection to the cross and sceptre of Christ. The light is not divine, which is not leading on this subjection, from year to year. "And if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

It is not darkness, however, if our relief from distressing fears of God, arises from his lovely character as God in Christ, delighting in mercy, and reconciling the world unto himself. Relief from this view of the glory of God in the face of Jesus, is spiritual illumination, and that, too, in a very high and emphatic sense. The light of creation is not more directly the effect of the power of the Spirit, than this light upon the character of God is from the love of the Spirit. It is totally different from the mild and gentle views of the Almighty, which fashion and philosophy talk of. The believing views of a Christian are mild and gentle; but not in the world's sense of the words, nor for the world's reasons. The leniency and love which worldly men ascribe to God, have not only no moral influence upon their hearts or habits, but they are ascribed to him just to hide the danger of caring nothing about him. They are not conclusions drawn from the unspeakable gift of his Son as a Saviour, nor from the promise of his Spirit as a comforter, nor from the unsearchable riches of grace and the eternal weight of glory; but from the base wish to sin without danger, and to die without fear.

The light of a Christian is, also, quite a different thing even from that of the formalist; who, in speaking of the divine character, uses the very words of Scripture. The expressions, "God is love," "God delighteth in mercy," "God can be just in justifying him that believeth in Jesus," are read and repeated by thousands, who neither wonder nor adore. All this is mere matter of course to them. It wins no love, and leads to no prayer: it illuminates neither the shadow of death,

nor the pilgrimage of life : it is all phrases without meaning, or facts without interest. Not so to a Christian ; he can hardly believe, for joy, that God is love ! He feels so unworthy of any love, and is so ashamed of his ingratitude, that he is afraid of presuming, even when most willing to be an entire and eternal debtor to grace. The words, "God is love," are infinitely more to him than words. He sees in them the face of God smiling on penitents ; the heart of God yearning over his children ; the wisdom of God guiding, the power of God guarding, and the grace of God sanctifying, all his family. He hears in them promises of pardon, and pledges of acceptance, and assurances of glory.

This is illumination ! True ; it is nothing but the mind of the Spirit in the written word ; nothing but the meaning of Scripture ; but then, what a meaning it has, compared with what we used to find in it, and put upon it ! It is only old truth ; but it is now full and overflowing with new glory, to a Christian.

And, who is to blame, because all who read that "God is love," do not see so much in it as to be melted or amazed by it ? Is the illuminating Spirit "a respecter of persons ?" No ; but he is a respecter of principles, and a respecter of laws and order : and if any will pay no respect to the word of God, nor to the reproofs of providence, nor to the dictates of conscience, he respects the authority of divine means too much to illuminate without them. It is as "the Spirit of revelation," as well as "of wisdom," that he enlightens the eyes of the understanding in the knowledge of God as love. Eph. i. 17.

No. VII.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN INTERCESSION.

It is just as true that the Spirit "ever liveth" to help our infirmities by suggesting prayer, as that the Saviour ever liveth to intercede for the prayerful. Indeed, the respective offices of Father, Son, and Spirit, in reference to prayer, seem to sustain each other. The Father's readiness to hear, seems to be as much the Spirit's reason for helping our infirmities, and the Son's reason for pleading his own merits on our behalf, as their joint intercession is the Father's reason for answering prayer. He answers it because the Spirit suggests it, and because the Son presents it ; and they promote it thus, because he delights to hear it.

This seems the grand moral reason why the Holy Spirit does so much to help our infirmities, and the Saviour so much to insure our success in prayer. The Spirit knows that supplication has only to be "according to the will of God," in order to find a sure place in the golden censer of the Son ; and the Son knows that the incense of his merits can sanctify and sustain it with the Father ; and, therefore, both ever live to intercede for us ;—the one on earth, and the other in heaven ; the one by teaching us to pray, and the other by praying for us.

There is as much holy wisdom in this arrangement for the success of our prayers, as there is

paternal kindness in it. It enables us to know, in some measure, what degree of interest the Saviour is likely to take in our prayers. It prevents us from imagining that he ever liveth to intercede for those, who never pray for themselves. Thus we are not allowed, for a moment, to suppose that Christ is praying for us, if we dislike or neglect prayer ; nor that he takes much interest in our prayers, when we are heartless or heedless in devotion.

It is just as necessary, in order to secure the intercession of Christ on our side, that our prayers be "according to the will of God," as that intercession itself is, in order to secure their acceptance : for Christ will no more put heartless prayers into his censer, than God will answer Christless prayers. In this matter, the Son looks as much to the way in which we treat the Spirit, as the Father looks to the way in which we treat the Son. Whoever will not pray in the name of Jesus, the Father will not answer him ; and whoever will not yield to the strivings of the Spirit, the Son will not own him.

And who can wonder at this ! Where is the common sense, or the common honesty, of the man who objects to the duty of "praying in the Holy Ghost," or "with the Spirit ?" The help of the Spirit is just as open and free to him, as the merits of Jesus. He is just as welcome to ask for the Spirit, as to add to his prayers the all-prevailing name of the Saviour. There is no more obstacle between him and the help of the Holy Spirit, than there is between him and his Bible. He may as soon and easily obtain help in prayer, from the Spirit of grace and supplication, as obtain from his Bible the rules and reasons for pleading only the merits of Christ.

Nor is this all. That man is not to be found under a gospel ministry, or after reading the Scriptures, who is an utter stranger to the strivings of the Holy Spirit. Every such man has felt, again and again, convictions of the duty of prayer, and impulses to pray. Many, alas, resist them ; but all who hear the gospel feel them. Yes ; and find it so difficult to get rid of them, that their ingenuity is put upon the rack, to find out speculative excuses for not praying. None have had such hard work in stifling their convictions of the duty and necessity of prayer, as those who are most dexterous and prompt, in excusing their neglect. Whenever a man asks, How can I pray in the Spirit, before I receive the Spirit ?—he has had more stirring up from him, than he liked to feel, or cares to confess. He does not wish for any more drawing or driving to the mercy-seat, than he has felt. He has had enough of both, to convince him, that praying will not fit in with his pursuits. He has been near enough to the foot-stool of the throne of grace, to see that he does not like it at present ; but, as this confession does not sound well in words, he sets himself to excuse himself. And if his pretences of wanting time, or ability, for prayer, do not silence either his friends or his conscience, he tries to prove that the work of the Spirit is too great, and too good, and too remarkable, to have any connection with what he has felt. It means (forsooth !) every thing, but "the day of small things," which he wants to despise, because he dislikes it. Accordingly, he

would be any thing but glad, to have that Spirit, which, he says, he has not got, and cannot command. In a word; he dreads having any more of his work, at present, than he has had. He saw its face, and did not like it; and, therefore, he wants to make out that the Holy Spirit has done nothing for him!

This is the real secret of all the pretences put forward by the delaying and undecided hearers of the gospel. The Spirit of God is doing more for them than they wish at present; doing so much, that the only way in which they can get to the bustle or the follies which quench divine influence, is, to deny the divinity of what they feel at solemn moments. Not a man of them has the shadow of a doubt upon his mind, as to whether he could pray—when he feels thus. He sees clearly that, were he to *yield* then, he both could and would pray enough to commit himself beyond all retracting or retreating.

If it be thus base and criminal to “resist the Holy Ghost,” even whilst he is only convincing of the duty of prayer; how much more, when he has convinced us of the advantages and enjoyments, which may be derived from it, and found in it! And this conviction he has established in the inmost soul of all who have yielded to his first strivings. Whoever has allowed himself to be drawn to the throne of grace, and has there given way to his feelings, until his heart was “poured out” before God, has found by experience, that it is good to draw nigh unto God. He may not have found, at first, all the enjoyment, nor all the relief, which he has heard others speak of; but he did rise from his knees a happier man than he knelt down. He did wonder, after giving way to strong cries and tears, that even he should have disliked to be alone with God in prayer. He did resolve, that he would soon return to the mercy-seat.

The manifestation of the love of the Spirit, which occurs at this point in conversion, is peculiarly interesting. He may not exactly comfort nor cheer the soul, when it first yields to him as “the Spirit of supplication;” but he either soothes it into something like calmness, or excites it to a fervency of holy desire, which seems the forerunner of hope. If he do not reveal at once to the soul, its warrant and welcome to believe on Christ for its own salvation, he does show enough of the sufficiency of Christ, to satisfy us that “he can save to the uttermost, them that come unto God by him.” Thus we are made to see and feel, that prayer is not a vain thing; that its efficacy is worth trying; and that the very act of trying it, brings some composure.

Thus a lesson is taught by the first influence of earnest prayer, which is never forgotten. The Spirit lodges and seals a sense of the usefulness of drawing nigh to God, which can never be lost. It may be weakened; but it cannot be erased.—Accordingly, the most heartless, yea, the most hopelessly backslider, cannot forget nor despise “the days of old,” when the candle of the Lord first shone in his closet. He may not dare to pray—he may dread nothing so much as being alone with God in prayer;—but he has no doubt of the happiness of those who are prayerful. He envies their state. He knows that there is no happiness for him, until he resume the devotional

habits of his first love, and become a closet Christian again.

These sad effects of quenching “the Spirit of supplication,” will enable us to understand clearly, how yielding to his intercession *with* us, secures the intercession of Christ *for* us. Christ will put no prayer into his censer of much incense, which has not been put into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And, on the other hand, it is just as true, that Christ will not exclude from his golden censer, any prayer which the Spirit excites. It may not be answered at once; but it is sure to be presented, accepted, and remembered. It is as truly *filed* at the throne of God, as it was felt by the heart or breathed by the lips.

What an encouragement this is to pray “in the Spirit,” or “with the Holy Ghost!” I do not mean, of course, that we should pray only when we are powerfully urged to the duty, by a deep sense of want, or weakness, or danger. No. There may be quite as much of both the love and the grace of the Spirit, in enabling us to keep up regular habits of devotion from day to day, as in those powerful impressions, which seem audible calls to extraordinary prayer. Indeed, wherever there is no *habit* of morning and evening prayer, there will seldom be any compliance with the calls or drawings of the Spirit to special prayer: for if the standing law be disregarded, it is not likely that the occasional impulse will be obeyed. Such impulses, however, ought not to be resisted. There is, depend on it, a strong “needs be,” whenever the Holy Spirit bears in upon the mind, the conviction that there must be more prayer than usual, or more fervency than there has been! He foresees some imminent or real danger to our principles, our character, or our peace, whenever he stirs us up to “cry mightily unto God.” This is the signal he gives, to forewarn us of approaching trials of some kind. Yes; whenever his voice in the heart says, like the Saviour’s in Gethsemane, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation,” something is about to happen, which we are not prepared for, by our ordinary devotion. Either trouble is coming, which we are not fit to sustain in our present strength; or temptations are coming, which we are not able to overcome by it: either our spiritual or our temporal affairs are on the eve of some *turn*, which will involve serious consequences, perhaps for life; or Satan has taken measures to “sift” us “as wheat:” and, therefore, our faith must fail, unless the Intercessor in heaven pray for us! All this the Spirit foresees, and thus forewarns us of; and, therefore, he intercedes with us, to watch and pray for ourselves, that Christ may intercede for us. The sufficiency of the Saviour’s grace, or strength, for sustaining us in the hour of trial, is, remember, “made perfect in weakness;” and it is by pressing upon us the immediate necessity of praying more earnestly, that the Spirit reminds us of our weakness, and apprizes us of our danger.

Christian, let no clamor against impulses in general, divert you from obeying the Holy Ghost, when he is impelling you to abound in prayer, or to improve your devotional spirit. You are in no danger of praying too often or too long in your closet. Fanaticism does not send her dupes, nor Fancy her votaries, into the closet to wrestle with

God for grace to help in time of need. Prayer against falling or fainting, is not one of the dictates of a spirit of illusion, or of delusion. There is real need for more than usual prayer, whenever your sense of need is strong. There is a critical *nick* of time at hand, whenever your heart tells you, that you are too far off from the mercy-seat to be safe or steady.

I am not foreboding evil, if by that you mean only afflictions or reverses. I am thinking of far heavier calamities than a sick-bed, or than sinking in the world: these are, indeed, trying; but they are not ominous, nor so perilous as they seem. Swimming in the world, is far more hazardous to a Christian than sinking in it. He knows how far he can sink, and yet be safe: but he does not know how far he can rise without losing his piety. He knows the worst that "bread and water" can do to his soul; but he cannot calculate the effect of luxury, nor of money, nor of ease, upon his present character or upon his eternal state.

This, however, is not exactly what I mean. Like myself, you may be in no great danger from abundance. There may, however, be a worldly spirit, without wealth; and a slothful spirit in religion, without the snare of leisure to induce it; and a backsliding spirit, without any great falling off of public character. Here is our danger; and it is real. For how many sink and settle into a heartless profession, by which they lose all enjoyment of religion, and are lost to all usefulness! Now, it is to prevent this sad issue that the Holy Spirit is so prompt and pressing, whenever the power of godliness begins to decline in the heart. —Then he gives warning at once; and, for a time, haunts the soul with the interceding cry, "Come, my people, enter your chamber; watch and pray, lest ye fall into temptation."

O, what falls, and shipwrecks, and apostacies, and backslidings, might have been prevented, had all who were thus challenged and charged, when they began to decline from their "first love," been obedient to the heavenly vision! Let their folly and fate teach us wisdom. It is infinitely easier to obey these timely promptings of the Spirit, than to extricate ourselves from the entanglements of backsliding. An hour of special prayer then, may save to us, what the disobedient have not been able to recover for years, the presence of God, and the hope of acceptance. It will also prevent us from being, as they all are eventually, "rebuked in wrath, and chastened in hot displeasure," by the strokes of retribution.

A prudent Christian cannot but admire and adore the love of the Spirit, in interfering thus promptly and urgently, to check the first symptoms of declension, by powerful incentives to more prayerfulness. He will also trace his love in drawing out prayer to all the *extent* of the promised salvation. For, how true it is, even in regard to mercy and grace, that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought." Rom. viii. 26. It is said, I am aware, that our chief difficulty is, to know what temporal things we should pray for. And it is, no doubt, more difficult to choose aright amongst temporal blessings, than amongst spiritual, in one sense; for we are very bad judges of what is best for us in this life,

and very prone to desire most what is most withheld from us. In regard to temporal things, however, we never desire too little, nor feel indifferent to what is good; whereas, there are many spiritual blessings which we could but too easily overlook entirely, or dispense with until the evening of life, did not the Holy Spirit force them upon our notice, and draw them into our prayers. For, how few would seek humility, were not pride dangerous; or spirituality of mind, were it not death to be carnally minded; or communion with God, were it not a mark of union to Christ; or the witness of the Spirit, were it not the proof of the work of the Spirit; or the joy of salvation, were it not an earnest of eternal life! Indeed, I dread to look at the long list of promised blessings, which would hardly be prayed for, or thought of at all, were they not brought to our remembrance, and built into our prayers, by the Holy Spirit. Alas, we are so inclined to be contented with, if not to prefer, a mere escape from the wrath to come at last, that, if left to our own choice, we should be in very great danger of not praying at all for the divine image or presence; for the seal of the fruits of the Spirit; for likeness to Christ, or for a sense of his constraining love. We could make less serve and satisfy us, were we left to our own choice, or to take our own way.

Nor is this all. We have but very inadequate views, at first, even of the extent of our need of mercy to pardon; and much more inadequate views of our need of grace to help. We mean, indeed, much of both, when we begin to pray in good earnest: but still, much less than we really need, even if we feel our need of more than we can venture to hope for at the time.

I do not know that I could have believed this, in reference to my need of pardoning mercy, had the fact been told me when, like the publican, I began to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," without daring to lift up my eyes. Then, the fear of not seeing God through eternity, and the impossibility of saving myself from the curse of the broken law, made mercy unspeakably dear to me. But, now that I hope to see God as he is, and dwell for ever in his immediate presence, I see my need of a kind and degree of pardoning mercy, which I had no idea of at first. Then, mercy enough to keep me out of hell was all I thought of: but now I see the need of such pardon,—of such reconciliation,—and of such acceptance, as shall enable me to feel at *home* with God, in heaven, to all eternity! This is not, perhaps, another kind of mercy than that I began to seek; but it is quite a different degree of it, and leads to as much prayer. For, who can realize, or imagine, and not pray fervently for it, a pardon so gracious and complete—that the soul shall be perfectly at *home* for ever in heaven, even when it knows as it is known, and when it beholds God in all the majesty of his authority, in all the glory of his holiness, and in all the independence of his blessedness? The bare idea of going up to the eternal throne, even once, without terror or shame, is almost inconceivable: for how much is required in order to one welcome? But an eternity of welcome, composure, and joy, at that throne!—What is the mercy which bestows and prepares for that?

We should not appreciate it, nor think of it, did not the Spirit help our infirmities, and teach us to pray for it.

His love is not less conspicuous, in leading us to pray for all the grace we need to help, in this world. Now we have already found out that to be more than we suspected at first. And yet, the conviction, "I shall need much grace to keep me," is, in general, a very deep one in the mind of a penitent, even from the first. Indeed, so deep, that many yield to the temptation of keeping back from the sacramental fellowship of the church, lest they should fall away, or disgrace it. This is a sad mistake: for that fellowship is one of the most effectual of all the appointed means, to prevent falling. It is not, however, sufficient of itself. Accordingly, those who have been longest under sacramental bonds, know well, yea, best, that they have acquired far more grace than they ever thought of needing, when they gave themselves to the Lord and to the church. There have been times of trial and temptation, when we have been ready to give up all hope, and even to throw up all religion. There have been moods of temper or of spirit, when nothing in religion seemed sure, sacred, or interesting. There have been conjunctions of the world and the heart, by adversity or prosperity, which almost produced Atheism, or the wish that there were neither a God nor an hereafter. Oh, had not the Spirit helped us then, when our infirmities were becoming infatuations, where, what, should we have been now? Had he not brought us up from "the fearful pit and miry clay" of such temptations, and put a new song into our lips by putting a new prayer into our hearts, we should have sunk where we fell, and risen no more.

But whilst such restorations and deliverances should be had in everlasting remembrance, we must not forget how much love there is in the help we receive from the Spirit, which enables us to keep on praying, in spite of all our hinderances and discouragements. I do not think lightly of the injury which sudden and peculiar temptations do to piety. I wonder and adore, to see how the Spirit repairs and counteracts these injuries: not less, however, to see how he prevents the ordinary tear and wear of the world, and the natural tendencies of the heart, and the force of prayerless example, from wasting away both the love and habit of devotion. Keeping alive the fire of heaven upon the altar of the temple, was nothing to this preservation of the spirit of prayer! That fire had many a shelter; but this is like a spark in the ocean, exposed to the waters beneath and to the winds above.

One way in which he preserves the love and habit of prayer, is, by the remarkable help he gives at times of peculiar need. It is no uncommon thing for Christians to go to their closet on one errand, and yet completely to forget it, when they catch the spirit of prayer, or obtain communion with God. Perhaps the original errand is, to plead for the removal of some heavy cross, or for the continuance of some temporal blessing: when, lo, in trying to bring this desire into harmony with the divine will,—the thoughts rise amongst the divine perfections which call for submission; and, there, get amongst the perfections which win love

and awaken gratitude. The worth of the soul shines out in this light. The claims of eternity begin to open. Then, the favor of God is so felt to be life, and his loving-kindness better than life, that nothing else is thought of! Time, earth, cares, and comforts, are all forgotten in the absorbing glory of salvation, and in the beaming smiles of the divine presence. The soul finds in communion with God and the Lamb, perfect peace and joy unspeakable; and thus loses time, in eternity; earth, in heaven; the body, in the soul! And the less is really lost in the greater. We come forth, after such "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," willing to do or suffer any thing, and prepared to resign all our wishes to the divine will.

Christian! let them doubt the actual help of the Spirit, who pray only by fits and starts; and let them overlook his love in helping infirmities, who are satisfied with repeating forms of sound and serious words: we know, that he has enabled us to pray *without* book at times, as well as with it; and drawn us beyond all that books contained, and all that we ourselves intended. Neither books, nor memory, could have led us into some of the outpourings of the heart, which we have been occasionally drawn into by the Spirit, when we have let him have "free course" in his suggestions, and have followed them up honestly.

No. VIII.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN RESTORATION.

It is worthy of special notice and remembrance, that whatever was the kind or the degree of spiritual declension in any of the seven churches of Asia; and however the particular counsels and warnings addressed to them varied according to the depth of their fall; still, the great general command to each of them was one and the same,—*"Hear what the Spirit saith."* This is neither accident nor mere form. Attention to the Spirit was the only cure for any of the defections.—Without hearing him, the Ephesians could no more have regained their "first love," than the Laodiceans could have thrown off their lukewarmness. Without help from the Spirit, the "little strength" of the church in Philadelphia was as unequal to overcome "in the hour of temptation," as the Sardians' "name to live," was unfit to strengthen the things which were ready to die. Pergamos would have continued to listen to the false doctrine of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes, and Thyatira to the licentious doctrine of Jezebel, had not both set themselves to listen again to "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Accordingly, all the return of any of these churches to their first love and their first works, was in consequence of renewed attention to the Holy Ghost; and only lasted whilst he was listened to in his oracles.

It is also worthy of special notice that the Epistles to the Asiatic churches, although dictated to John by the lips of the Saviour himself, and all opened with proclamations of his own supremacy as the head of the church, are yet invariably closed by the authority of the Spirit, as the author of re-

velation, to enforce them. The Saviour does not conclude by saying, "Hear what I say; but thus, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Thus whilst he maintains his own office and honor as king and priest of the church, and condescends to act as her prophet too, he asserts and sustains the office of the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of inspiration.—The Saviour makes himself heard, that we may recognise and revere the Comforter, in the lively oracles. The reason of this may not be obvious at a glance; but the wisdom of it is profound, and its design gracious. The prominence and importance thus given to the work which the Holy Spirit carries on *in the soul*, by the truth, like that given to the work of Christ *for the soul*, is, for the purpose of shutting us up to an entire dependence upon each. Were less said, than that Christ is "all in all" in the work of redemption, we should divide our faith between his merits and our own morals, or seek to be justified partly by law and partly by grace; and thus never come to the point, in penitence nor in humility. For, it is by seeing that we must look to nothing but the blood of Christ, for pardon and acceptance,—and that there is nothing else to look to for justification,—that we come to set ourselves in good earnest, to fall fully in with God's plan of saving. Finding that half-measures will not do; or, that God will have nothing to say to us, until we have nothing to say to him, but just that Christ died for the ungodly; we are glad to go any length in abandoning all legal claims and reliances; and become intent upon glorying only in the cross of Christ. We retreat from one thing after another, until we give up every thing but the cross, and say of it alone, "Behold, O God, our shield." Indeed, we get no quiet rest, until we cease to argue or plead, by any thing we have become, or intend to be; and begin to confine ourselves to the one plea, "Look upon us in the face of thine anointed."

This is that reception of Christ, concerning which it is said, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John i. 12. Now, just such a place in our attention and confidence, should he given to the Holy Spirit, in reference to his work. We ought as much to look to him for grace to help, as to the Saviour for pardon and acceptance. Whenever we look into the Scriptures for counsel or consolation, we ought to look up to the Spirit for a heart to appropriate and improve them aright. Whatever means of grace we use for safety or edification, we should never forget that their success depends upon the blessing of the Holy Spirit. In a word, we ought to be as much afraid of overlooking or underrating the Comforter, as of not applying to the Mediator; and as watchful against leaning to our own understanding, or trusting our own hearts, as against self-righteousness or legality: for the work of the Spirit is as much intended to shut us out from self-dependence, in the matter of sanctification, as the work of Christ is to shut us out from self-complacency, in the matter of justification.

To concede all this as a point in theology, or to agree to it as a maxim in religion, is, however, not enough. It must just be applied and acted upon, as you do in the case of making Christ "all

and all" in your salvation. Now in doing that, you search out your legal tendencies; you set them down as refuges of lies; you not only pray that God would sweep them away, but also watch lest they should be swept back again by Satan. You are not easy when you find yourself looking less to Christ. You even become afraid of your sincerity in religion, when you are not conscious of a single-hearted and exclusive reliance upon his merits.

Well; just such a jealousy and watchfulness should we exercise over our own hearts, in reference to the grace of the Holy Spirit. We must no more allow ourselves to forget him when we open the Bible, or enter the sanctuary, or engage in prayer, than we overlook the Father or the Son. We ought to be as much afraid of grieving him, as of dishonoring them: for as we profess to ascribe equal and everlasting glory to Father, Son, and Spirit, we are bound to pay them equal attention. I mean, that the attention given to the Spirit, should not be left to accident, nor paid in formal compliment. And it need not be so. It is just as easy, because as much our duty, to give him his proper place in our confidence, as to give the Father and the Son their place. We took some pains to ascertain, and to fix in our minds, the precise reference which our prayers, our hopes, and our feelings should have to God and the Lamb. We did not leave that to chance nor to impulse, when we became anxious that our fellowship should truly be with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ: and the fellowship or "communion of the Holy Ghost," cannot be kept up by paying him empty compliments, nor by yielding vague honors to him.

I dare not ask yet, whether you feel deeply interested in these hints. They are both too few and feeble to command absorbing attention, or to excite much expectation. Perhaps they do not even suggest to you their precise design which is, to explain how backsliding and declension chiefly arise. Now that it is not fully explained by saying, that some sin of omission or of commission, grieved the Spirit of God, and then the power of godliness declined rapidly. This is, indeed, quite true; but it is not all the truth. The sin, whether of omission or of commission, or of both, which led to this sad result, was, itself, preceded and occasioned by inattention to the Holy Spirit, or by expecting help from his grace without hearing his word. For "what the spirit *saith* to the churches," is as much his means of sanctifying and comforting, as what the Saviour hath done and suffered for the church is God's reason for pardoning. Now we expect no pardon, apart from the cross. We are quite sure that we should receive none, were we to look away from the cross, or even to look to it but partly. Well; it is just as true, that we are not warranted to expect grace to help, apart from an impartial use of the word of grace. The Spirit sanctifies, and sustains, and consoles, "by the truth," just as God acquits and accepts by the atonement. But how few so notice this fact, as to follow up their full submission to the cross, by a full submission to "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Here is the real secret of backsliding, and of

that loss of "first love," which is so common. We content ourselves with selecting, here and there from the Holy Scriptures, a few of the most remarkable directions for walking in the Spirit; and a few of the most solemn warnings against grieving the Spirit; and, having adopted these general maxims, together with certain strong phrases about the power of the Spirit, we take for granted that we are as orthodox and honest in reference to him, as we took pains to be in regard to the Saviour.

Now I do not mean to insinuate, that we are either willingly or wittingly dishonest, in thus satisfying ourselves with a general recognition of the claims and commands of the Spirit. No! We honestly suppose, that this will be enough to keep up and carry on our piety. It is too, as much as the generality possess, and more than some profess. What then? It has not always been enough to keep up the power of godliness in our hearts, nor to prevent backsliding in our hearts. Nay; it has not been enough to secure equal attention even to "the fruits of the Spirit." For, after all our professed subjection to him, are there not some of them we have never yet set ourselves to cultivate or consider? "The fruit of the Spirit is, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22. Look at this list, and judge for yourself, whether you have gone far enough in honoring the Holy Spirit. Well might Paul say, when he brought this list of graces and virtues before the churches, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Ver. 25. Why; if we had given as little attention to "temperance," or to "faith," or to general "goodness," as to "love, joy, peace," or as to "meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering," we should have made "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience" long ago! Even now, did our account stand as ill with the morals of this list, as it does with the mercies of it, we should almost set ourselves down as being still unconverted. The absence of both "joy and peace" does not, however, prove that against us. Conversion may be real, even although our enjoyment be but small, and our love but weak yet. But still, although neither hypocrisy nor unregeneracy is proved, by the want of joy, nor by the weakness of love, inattention to the Spirit is proved against us by them: for as the good seed of joy, love, and peace, is as abundant in his word, as the good seed of faith or repentance, both the want and the weakness of the former fruits of the Spirit, must be occasioned by our not sowing that seed sufficiently. "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 8; and joy and peace in believing, are first-fruits of that harvest of glory. But still, they are as really the fruit from seed, as they are foretastes of heaven. Hence, Paul prayed for the churches, that they might have "joy and peace in believing;" not in wishing for them, nor in waiting for them, nor in merely praying for them; but in believing the joy-giving and peace-giving promises, or in sowing to the Spirit the good seed of good hopes and strong consolations.

This is giving the Holy Spirit his proper place, in a proper way. There is both sense and humility in wishing and waiting for the joy of the Holy

Ghost, when we are sowing the seed of it, and watching the springing of it, and watering the leaf of it by prayer: but we are trifling with the Spirit, when we are not attending to what he saith unto the churches. For how can he help us on points, on which we neglect to "hear" him? If, indeed, he had not spoken enough in the promises to comfort us: or not enough in the precepts, to direct us; or not enough in the warnings to check us; then wishing and waiting for the upspringing of the fruits of the Spirit in our hearts, without sowing or seed, might neither be sinful nor useless. It is, however, both, now that the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, and to furnish us thoroughly for every good word and work.

Thus we might have, and we ought to have, the joy of salvation, and the Spirit of adoption, and the earnest of heaven, as well as the desire for them. They are as fully provided for, and as freely offered, in "what the Spirit saith unto the churches," as hope is warranted by what he saith to the world. "The Spirit speaketh expressly," when he assures the world, that whosoever will believe shall have eternal life; and not less expressly when he says to the church, "he that believeth hath eternal life, and shall not come into condemnation." Yea, there is *much* "written" to believers for the express purpose, that they "may know that they have eternal life," and thus feel encouraged and bound to continue a life of faith on the son of God.

It is by overlooking this, that backsliding is so common. Many converts do not listen to the good and comfortable words of the Spirit, the belief of which gives joy and peace; but waste their time in wishing for comfort to come into their minds; or to spring up in their hearts; not from what he has said, but from what he can do. The consequence is, they have not enough of "the peace of God," nor of "the comfort of the Holy Ghost," to keep their hearts and minds happy or steadfast; and thus they lose their first love, and often neglect their first works.

If you have never studied this subject before, you are in some danger of getting impatient with this mode of treating it; especially as I hardly seem to have a definite object before me. Do you then ask me, what I mean? I am glad of it; for a plain question will bring me to the point, or stop me altogether. Well; I mean, that you have nothing to expect from the Spirit, but just what the Saviour promised; which is, that the Comforter would sanctify and console by the truth—by leading into all truth,—and by bringing it to remembrance. If, therefore, you and I overlooked or forgot this fact, and satisfied ourselves with listening to the Spirit on only a *few* great truths, what could be expected, but that our comforts should be few and small, and thus our declensions many!

Now, do not quarrel nor quibble with this fact, as if it would impose upon you a task which you have neither time nor ability to undertake. All that the Spirit hath said to the churches, is not so much, but that it may be examined and considered too, by reading over the Epistles—not the work of a month to the busiest! And begin, if you will, by hearing what he hath said to comfort,

and thus to confirm, them who believe. You want to know whether the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you; and he says, that it is "upon all them that believe." Rom. iv. 22. You want to know whether you are a child of God; and he saith, "ye are all children of God through faith in Christ." You want to know whether your sins are pardoned; and he saith, "he that believeth is justified from all things." What do you mean by comfort, if this be not enough to comfort you?—For, what more could the Spirit say to you, were he to speak to you as he did to the prophets and apostles? True; the comfort of these sweet assurances turns upon faith. They are only addressed to believers. What then? You are not as an unbeliever, if all your reliance be upon Christ, for the holy salvation proclaimed in the gospel. You are a believer, if you love salvation from sin and wrath, and be honestly seeking it by prayer. The Spirit does not stand upon niceties, nor lay down perplexing distinctions, when speaking of faith. He looks to the heart; and when it is well disposed towards the cross and sceptre of Christ, and willing to be a debtor and dependant for all mercy and grace, he recognises faith, whoever else may doubt or deny its existence. O yes; the love of the Spirit is too tender and considerate, to perplex or embarrass an humble penitent with intricate questions about the nature of faith. The substance of his questions is,—in whom do you believe for salvation? and for what holy purpose do you believe? and if our souls, in answer to this appeal, throw themselves upon the Lamb slain for grace and law, the Spirit saith,—“be of good cheer, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven; go, and sin no more.”

There would be less backsliding, if this were believed. Neither Satan nor the world would be able to get such a hold upon us as they do, if we took care to keep a firm hold upon what the Spirit saith to the churches, as a Comforter. And were he to be as much listened to as a sanctifier, there would soon be but few complaints about desertion, or darkness, or doubts.

Where backsliding, however, has occurred, what the Spirit saith is, “Remember from whence thou hast fallen, and repent, and do thy first works. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and fight against thee, with the sword of my mouth.” Rev. ii. 16. And he keeps his word! The Spirit makes his sword turn against the backsliding, until they return to their first love and their first works. Accordingly, they can find no comfort in his promises; no refreshing from his ordinances; and but little hope from the glorious gospel itself. Thus, their Bibles become to them books they are afraid to open; and sacraments, awful hazards; and their closets, painful retirements.

But still, the Spirit does not say, even to such, that they are hypocrites; nor that they never knew the grace of God in truth. No! He treats them as fallen; but not as if they never had stood. Accordingly, he sends them to recommence their “first works,” and not to begin their faith anew. I mean, he does not treat them as unbelievers, but as ungrateful and disobedient children, who require to be both wooed and warned to return home. Here, again, the love of the Spirit shines

brightly! He does not make the worst of very bad cases; but even when “things are ready to die,” says, “Be watchful, and strengthen” them.

The general sentiment of this essay will come under your notice in another form, when I trace the love of the Spirit watering and ripening the good seed of his own word. As, however, I have referred so much to the Apocalyptic Epistles in this chapter, I cannot close it without reminding you, that the “first works” of the primitive churches included one work, which very few modern Christians begin with—the consecration of their *property* to spread the gospel. I say, to the spread of the gospel; not the aggrandisement of its ministers, nor the architecture of its temples. They laid their goods at the feet of the apostles, that the apostles might lay the gospel before the world, and enable its poor adherents to be faithful unto death.

This, when it is done at all now by individuals, is usually their *last*, instead of their first work. And yet, the first emotions of a true convert, are very much akin to the benevolent feelings of the first converts at Pentecost. Indeed, were the ministers of the gospel as much pledged to the world now, or as intent upon carrying or sending the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles, as the apostles were then, rich converts would do now as they did then; and the first work of every Christian, who had any property beyond the necessities of his family, would be to distribute to necessitous saints, and to help on the chariot of salvation. And this good work is not less necessary, now that it has to be begun in the churches. For the churches will never have the outpouring of the Spirit, until there be an outpouring of their own property into the treasury of the Lord.

This time is at hand; and it will be a *searching* time. It will soon be impossible for a rich man to believe the gospel, unless he is prepared to spread it. The kingdom of heaven is again making its strait gate a “needle’s eye,” through which the camels of providence cannot enter, without selling all they have, more than they really need. I tremble to think how many, when this duty is enforced, will, like him upon whom it was first enjoined, “go away sorrowful” from Christ, just because he wants their property as well as their faith.

No. IX.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN SEALING BELIEVERS.

If the witness of the Spirit be a somewhat mysterious, and thus a perplexing subject, to many Christians, the *seal* of the Spirit is an intimidating subject, to still more. Indeed, very few venture to say or think, that they are “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Eph. i. 13. This is hardly to be wondered at, however much it should be deplored; for when a Christian asks, “what is the seal of the Spirit?” and turns from his Bible to commentaries for an answer, he is not made much wiser, nor at all happier, by learning the ancient modes of sealing sacrifices, letters, and

property. To tell him, that believers are sealed, as these were, to distinguish and preserve them; only widens the question, without answering or simplifying it in the least. It then returns with the puzzling addition,—what is the distinctive mark? What is the impress of the seal of God, upon the children of God?

Now, when the question takes this form, we can never be far wrong in taking general ground at first, and saying, “they that are after (or according to) the Spirit, *mind* the things of the Spirit.” Rom. viii. 5. For whatever his seal be, they are not utterly unsealed, who are mindful of, and take a lively interest in, the things which the Holy Spirit has written, and wrought, and promised. And in like manner, they are not altogether unsealed, who are not unsanctified. Whoever has any real features of the image of God upon his heart and character, is not quite without the seal of the Spirit of God.

So far this process of settling the question may, indeed, somewhat confound sealing with sanctification and spiritual-mindedness. That, however, will do no harm to truth or piety. Far better confound the seal of the Spirit with the sanctification of the Spirit, than separate them. They cannot be separated, in fact, nor in experience, however they may be distinguished in theory.—Neither the unholy in character, nor the carnal in mind, have any seal of the Father, Son, or Spirit upon them. “Their spot is not the spot of his children;” but “the mark of the beast,” or of “the false prophet.” Accordingly, whenever any thing independent of faith and holiness, has been invented or paraded as the seal of heaven, it has always been some mystery of Babylon, or some vagary of fanaticism.

There is, amongst the truly pious, a familiar, but emphatic use of the word “sealing,” which I am persuaded, is quite as near to the real fact on this subject, as the definitions of any creed or critic. I allude, especially, to the well-known stanza,

“Prone to wander; Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love.
Here’s my heart! Lord take and seal it;
Seal it from thy courts above.”

Any Christian understands this; and every Christian feels his need of such sealing, and desires to experience its help. For, having found, again and again, that warmth and tenderness of heart can relapse into cold formality; and that our best frames are not abiding; and that both our views and vows can be almost forgotten at times; we cannot but desire this sealing work of the Holy Spirit. That may be more than the perpetuation or the ratification of our best views and feelings; but we know, and are sure, that we are neither prepared for more, nor likely to obtain a higher seal, until our principles and affections are more sealed or confirmed. And we know also, that when truth has the force of truth upon us, and whilst the spirit of prayer keeps up well, and whilst we walk humbly and circumspectly before God, neither our hopes nor our comforts are few or small. They may not amount, even then, to

all that is meant by the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise, as “the *EARNEST* of the inheritance of the purchased possession” of heaven; but they are so like it, that they cannot be far from it. For we have some foretastes of heaven, and some humble consciousness of the beginnings of meetness for the inheritance in light, when we are walking with God. They may not, indeed, be very lasting, nor at all rapturous whilst they do last; but they are both sweet and soothing. They help us to go on with some calmness, and with more relish, “look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

It is, therefore, well worth our while to trace the love of the Spirit, in sealing his own work upon the soul, even if his special seal be something more and higher, than settled principles and habits of faith and holiness. Indeed, the more than these it is, the more need there is that these should be sealed, or confirmed, by the Spirit. For, to what can you look in your religious experience, which, if left to itself, would not have vanished away, like the early cloud or the morning dew?

True; there is vitality in gracious principles. But why? Just because the Spirit who implanted them, keeps them alive. The good work of grace in the heart does go on; but it does so, because he who began it, carries it on. Where would its goodness or its progress have been at this moment, had it depended entirely upon its first powerfulness, or upon our prudence? Alas, we have often brought that good work to a very low ebb, and into a bad position in our hearts. We have, at times, thought that it was utterly lost; or that it had been only a delusion, from the first. And it would have gone entirely, had not the Holy Spirit loved it more than we prized it, and watered it more than we watched it. It lives, because he, in common with Christ, has ever lived to keep it alive.

This is emphatically true of that sense of guilt and danger, in which the work of grace usually begins. For, had not our first convictions been sealed by the Spirit, as well as awakened by him, they would either have passed away, or been shaken off. Self-upbraiding, and especially self-condemnation, are so unnatural and painful, that the mind does all it can, first to evade them, and then to throw them off. The fear of perishing would never gain such an ascendancy over our self-love and self-complacency, as would lay us down, self-condemned, at the feet of God, did not the Spirit of God bring it to this point, and keep it there long enough to compel flight from the wrath to come. “A fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation,” is *too fearful*, to be willingly admitted, or long retained, by the mind. It would be kept out, or cast out, if we could.

But if it had—we should not have fled for refuge from the wrath to come, to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel. Had not the Spirit sealed our fears, until they shut us up to the cross and the mercy-seat, with the cry, “Lord, save, I perish,” we should never have become believers, nor penitents.

This sealing of the sense of danger, at the very time when the mind is doing all it can to rid itself of fear, is not, indeed the sealing spoken of in Scripture. That, whatever it be, comes “after”

believing. Hence Paul says to the Ephesians, "After ye believed, ye were sealed." i. 13. There would, however, be no believing with the heart unto salvation, if there was no sealing, on the heart, of the awakened sense of the need of salvation. It is only sealed convictions, that lead to saving conversion. Do, mark the love of the Spirit in this! It well deserves your admiration and gratitude. He carried out your fears far enough, and kept them up long enough, to render the gospel glad tidings to your uneasy conscience, and to make Christ precious to your soul. It was, no doubt, very painful at first, to be kept on the rack of suspense, whether by terror or by timidity; but it was good for you. It led to a fervency of prayer, and to a searching for hope, and to a casting of the soul upon Christ entirely, that more than compensated for all the pain. For you could not wish now, that your sense of danger had been slighter at the time, however trying it was for the time.

Well; observe how it has been sealed by the Spirit, since it ceased to be painful and oppressive. You have not now that "fearful looking for of judgment," which once haunted your conscience, or depressed your spirits: but still, you do look forward to the judgment-seat. You have lost "the fear which hath torment;" but you cherish still a holy fear or awe of both judgment and eternity. You are neither altogether fearful, nor altogether fearless. Why? There has been a sealing of your convictions at this *middle* point, between absolute dread, and perfect peace. I mean, that the Holy Spirit has taken care, that you should neither despair nor presume.

It is just as true of the way of salvation, as of our need of salvation, that both our knowledge and love of it, require to be sealed by the Spirit, in order to live and last. They are not natural to us, any more than self-condemnation; and, therefore, although more agreeable, they too would vanish away, if the power which created them did not confirm them. Accordingly, we know by bitter experience, that our clearest views of our warrant and welcome to trust in Christ, have become so dim and indistinct, that we could make nothing of the gospel for a time, in our own case. And, what is worse, our love of the gospel can wax cold, even when our knowledge of it is not clouded nor confused.

And had this darkness and disrelish gone on, or remained, when they set in upon our mind, where now had been our faith or hope? Who does not feel, that he requires to be *kept* to the cross, as well as brought to it? This is a melancholy confession; but it is only too true! Our hearts can be treacherous even to the Saviour; and our consciences, to the blood of sprinkling. They have both had to be sealed again and again, in order to bind them to the only thing which can pacify or purify them.

But, thus, they have been bound to "the horns of the altar" of Calvary! They may at times so loosen "the cords" of confirmation, as to seem about to fall or fly off entirely; but they do neither long. We cannot forget, for many days together, what we have known and felt of our need of a personal interest in Christ; nor can we give up, often, the habit of seeking, or of trying, to make sure,

of being found in him. Why? we have sealed persuasions of the necessity of this, and settled desires to obtain it. Our efforts have not, alas, been equal to our convictions or to our desires; but they would have been less than they are, had not the Holy Spirit stamped our concern to belong to Christ, with stability and perpetuity.

It is peculiarly delightful to trace the love of the Spirit, in keeping alive, in spite of all the world's snares, and all the heart's treacheries, and all Satan's temptations, a settled sense of our need of an interest in the unfinished work of Christ. This need has been before us for years, in all lights and in all forms; but we are neither tired of feeling it, nor indifferent about its success. Our hearts return to it, however they wander; and our prayers re-centre upon it, however they fail for a time. Thus our solicitude to be found in Christ, has been so far sealed by the Spirit, that we do not, and dare not, give up seeking to be found in him.

It is impossible not to remember, in this connection, how our general views and convictions of the truth of the gospel, have survived shocks of trial, or of temptation, which must have upset them, had they not been sustained by the power of the Holy Ghost. Sometimes, the dispensations of Providence have seemed to us, at variance with both the promises and doctrines of Grace. We have looked for light, and found darkness; for joy, and found only sorrow. Then, God's dealings seemed clashing with God's word, and his providence running contrary to his promises. This creates a sad dilemma! When this suspicion settles in the mind, it unsettles every thing for a time. Oh, were there no seal put upon our principles, when the rod of Providence seems to contradict the pen of inspiration, and the hand of God to undo the word of God, by mysterious visitations, how soon and entirely our faith would fail! Yes; had it not been sealed in the cloudy and dark day, when all things seemed against us, we should have made shipwreck of both faith and a good conscience.

It is not adversity only, that can thus peril the life of faith. Prosperity, also, not unfrequently, induces a state of mind prone to speculation, or open to sceptical suggestions. Satan thus finds it easy, first to amuse the soul with curious questions, and then to entangle it with plausible sophistries. And, having inserted the wedge of doubt among the mass of first principles, he drives it home, until they split up like dry timber or a veined rock. Nothing could stop their destruction, but seals which stop the rent.

If you have at all passed through trying exercises of mind from affliction or temptation, it ought not to be very difficult for you to conceive, how the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of promise, seals the souls unto the day of redemption. This is not more unlikely, nor more inexplicable, than that, as the Spirit of faith and truth, he should have sealed your principles and desires, when they were giving way before heavy trials, or harassing temptations. You are no stranger to sealing, if you have passed through deep and dark waters, without losing entirely your faith or your hope. You may well believe that the Spirit of promise

can seal your hopes, seeing he has so often revived them.

I prefer to let the meaning of the special seal of the Spirit *creep out* thus, without formality of definition or announcement, that you may not only judge for yourself, but also enjoy what you discover. It is, you see, only a higher and stronger degree of the hope of eternal redemption. That is usually weak and fluctuating at first. Even the joy and peace found at first in believing, have not much of a heavenly character about them. I mean, they are not so much earnest or foretastes of heavenly peace and joy, as sweet reliefs from present fear and anguish. They rather look back with wonder to the past day of dread, than forward with delight or composure to the final day of redemption; and thus are but *earnests* of "the earnest of the inheritance" of the saints in light.

It is then when the soul is enabled to lift up its head, in prospect of the final day of redemption, with a hope full of immortality, that it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, as the earnest of heaven. When he carries out the hope of finding grace, to the hope of glory also; and makes present communion with God and the Lamb, a sweet foretaste of eternal happiness; then, the soul is sealed as well as enlightened—confirmed as well as comforted.

This is not so uncommon as some say. There are, perhaps, but very few Christians, who have not been again and again sealed with earnest of the heavenly inheritance; although they have not ventured to call or consider their

"Moments rich in blessing,"

as earnest of glory. But, have you not known such times of refreshing, both in the sanctuary and the closet, when you found it something like heaven begun on earth, to see God in a light, and the Saviour in a light, which hushed all your anxieties, and filled your soul with peace? Have you not felt at times such *oneness* of spirit with all the armies of heaven, that you could not but see how instinctively and cheerfully your heart joined their harps in ascribing "Salvation and glory to God and the Lamb?" Have you not said at the wells of salvation,

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be,
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from Thee?"

This is the sealing work of the Spirit. Nothing is more unwarranted or unwise, than to regard that, as either indelible assurance, or an unalterable witness of sonship. It was not a full nor an abiding earnest of heaven to the Ephesians; although a real earnest whilst they took care not to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby they were sealed." Eph. iv. 30.

Observe this fact. Even whilst their first love was in its first glow, and when they were just sealed, Paul told them, that he bowed his knees for them in prayer, that they might be rooted and grounded in love, and that they might know the hope of their calling, and the riches of the glory

of their inheritance. Thus he wanted them to have more sealing earnestness of heaven.

And that their first sealing did not confirm their souls long, is but too evident from the Saviour's message from Patmos; charging them with having "left their first love," and threatening to remove their "candlestick out of its place," unless they repented. These facts give the lie direct to all theories of sealing, which make the seal final or indelible. His seal like every other part of his work, has to be renewed from time to time. Like his witness, it is not abiding any longer than we keep from grieving him. The Holy Spirit soon *unseals* every one, who makes a bad use of his comforts. And in unsealing the inconsistent and slothful, he evinces as much love, as when he seals, most fully, the diligent and devotional. For if we could find the sanctuary "a little heaven below," however seldom we were in our closets, or however unwatchful we were in the world, we should soon try more hazardous experiments.

You now see that the seal of the Spirit is nothing which makes either calling or election sure, apart from walking in the Spirit, and bearing the fruits of the Spirit. It makes these fruits foretastes of heavenly happiness: and that is all. But that is much! "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22. And what a sweet and useful sealing of the soul it is, when these take a heavenward direction, and something of a heavenly character! How delightful it is to love, feeling that it will be perfect and eternal in heaven! How joy improves, when we think of it becoming full of glory! How peace passeth all understanding, when we think of it reigning unto eternal life! How gentleness and goodness commend themselves, when we realise them as holiness which can never be tarnished, and as composure which can never be ruffled!

And this is the way to ripen the fruits of the Spirit. Instead of looking at them only in their connection with this world, we ought to lift them up, one by one, into the light and warmth of glory, that we may see and feel how they will be "pleasures for evermore." But this subject must not be treated thus vaguely. It will come under your notice in a more definite form, in a subsequent chapter, where the love of the Spirit, as the earnest of the heavenly inheritance, is traced experimentally.

No. X.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION.

IT is not easy, even with the promise of the Spirit before us, to maintain a lively hope of sanctification, in the presence of the solemn assurance, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord:"—and it would be impossible to hope at all in the face of the fact that "nothing which defileth" can enter heaven, if we had not the Holy Spirit to look to, and depend upon. They know little of heaven, and care still less about it, who do not feel this. It is deeply felt by those who

cannot forget, that heaven is a prepared place for prepared people; or an inheritance for which they must be made "meet" by grace, as well as made "heirs" by Christ. Such persons are not relieved from solicitude, or from suspense, in their own case, by knowing well, that meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, does not mean perfection in this world. They know too, that it means more holiness than they have yet attained or attempted. They also see things about themselves, so unholy, that they are almost afraid to regard themselves as real subjects of "the true grace of God." Even what is best in their character and heart is so imperfect, weak, and variable, that they sometimes doubt their own sincerity, as well as their personal interest in Christ. And, had they not the power and the grace of the Spirit to look to; and, did he not "in his love and in his pity save them," they would despair altogether, when they weighed themselves in the balance of the heavenly sanctuary. For, even with the Spirit to depend upon, they can hardly keep up hope, whilst the plagues of their hearts keep down the fruits of the Spirit in their character. Then, the difficulty is,—to see how there can be any sanctifying grace, where there is so much un sanctified nature; or how there can be any saving work of the Spirit, where the workings of the flesh are so powerful.

We must remember more the *power* of the Spirit, when we feel thus, if we would continue to follow holiness with a hope full of immortality. We must take hold of his love, in order to get hold of his power, at such a crisis. I cannot see how his hand will work for my sanctification, until I see how his *heart* feels towards me. Now although it be no easy matter to believe that he can love again, or love at all, after he has been so often grieved and vexed, by waywardness or by ingratitude; still, until this is believed, or at least hoped, his power cannot be drawn nor calculated upon. Accordingly, we try to gather from our wishes to be holy—from our willingness to submit to sanctifying discipline—from our dread and loathing of being given up to the lusts of the flesh or of the mind—from our keen sense of the way and degree in which holiness would make us happier, and from our deep sense of the beauty of holiness—we try to gather proofs, that the Holy Spirit would not have shown us these things, nor sealed our convictions of them, had he not loved us.

We are, indeed, very ingenious in balancing things, and in making the best of bad circumstances, when the fear of having the Holy Spirit taken from us, comes in like a flood upon our hearts. It is, however, for a good purpose, that we thus try to make out a good case in our own behalf. We are trying to increase our love to the Spirit, when we are thus straining our ingenuity to keep up the hope, that he loves us. It is not in order to be less afraid of grieving him, that we cling to the fond hope of being still precious in his sight. O, no; when we are most intent upon making out to ourselves, that he has not left us entirely, nor forgotten us at all, we are most determined not to quench or vex him again. Thus it is for holy purposes, that we wish the Holy Spirit to abide with us for ever. It is because we

feel his work in us, to be a "good work," and wish it to be carried on in its goodness as well as its existence, that we are so willing to hope for his continued help.

And we are right in all this. The Holy Spirit does love all who are trying to love him, and praying to be sanctified by his grace. His heart is not alienated, nor cold, nor grudging, towards any heart that wishes to open itself to the sweet influences of his holy presence. He knocks, and strives, and woos, even at the door of hearts which are resisting and evading him; and, therefore, it is no presumption nor rash conclusion, to believe that he is not departed from those who, although they have grieved him, are yet deeply grieved for having done so, and honestly desirous to be "temples of the Holy Ghost."

Well; it will much increase and confirm your habit of "minding the things of the Spirit," thus seriously and conscientiously, to trace the love of the Spirit in sanctification. You do not see that love, in either its warmth or strength, by a hasty glance at the surface of your own conformity to the divine image. You are not aware of how much he has done in you and for you, whilst you look only at what you have done yet in following holiness. His "good work" is greater and better than your good works. Not that it is a substitute for practical holiness. O, no! There is no good work of grace in the heart, where there are no good works of godliness in the life. There is none of the grace of the Spirit, where there are none of the fruits of the Spirit. But still, it is "the root of the matter," that brings forth the fruits of the matter. It is the goodness of the tree, that makes the fruit good.

It is not, however, by figures or emblems, that the worth of the principle of true holiness can be experimentally shown. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit;" a new creation; or the germe of a "divine nature," immortal in its principle, and holy in all its tendencies. Thus facts are stronger than figures, on this subject: indeed, so strong, that they are almost staggering to us, when we first try our own regeneration by them. No wonder! That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and in general, it has grown up so much before we seek to be born again of the Spirit; and, even after, it finds so much in earthly things, and in worldly example, to nourish and cherish it; whilst that which is born of the Spirit, and is spirit, finds so little, that the former overtops and outweighs it. O, how difficult it is, when comparing that which is born of the Spirit, with that which is born of the flesh, to prove, even to ourselves, the existence of the spiritual principle, whilst the carnal principle is so predominant! Were it not that the spiritual principle rallies again, after seeming extinct or overpowered; and thus continues to exist like a spark in the ocean, unquenched by the many cold and stormy waters which go over it, I see not how we could satisfy ourselves, that we are born of God. But here is a fact in our religious history,—inexplicable in any other way: we cannot give up altogether the desire or the pursuit of holiness; we cannot forget the necessity of it, nor the beauty in it, which we have seen and felt; we cannot bear the idea of coming under the dominion of sin or Satan; but

however mastered or betrayed at times, we gladly try again and again to "put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Is not this the finger of God, and the hand of the Spirit? This "pursuing" of holiness, although faint, goes on and holds out so, from year to year, notwithstanding fightings without and fears within, and in spite of so many hinderances and discouragements, that I cannot account for it, nor explain it at all, but by saying—spirit must have been born of the Spirit, where the holy principle thus survives, and tries to surmount the world, the devil, and the flesh. For nothing of this kind is seen in, or pretended by, the unregenerate.—When they are "led captive by Satan at his will," it is at their own will too. They are willing, as well as chained captives: whereas, when a Christian is most chained, he is most unwilling, and never so unhappy.

You feel this. Well; I want you to mark the love of the Spirit, in producing and sustaining this holy principle, or "law of the mind," which "the law of the flesh," although for ever warring against it, does not overcome. Now, what but love could induce him to implant this divine principle in our impure and earthly hearts? It is, remember, the germe of the divine image; "the seed of God!" Now, although our hearts are not, by nature, worse than others, we know most about our own; and ought, therefore, to judge from them, whenever we study the love or the condescension of the Spirit, in beginning in them the good work of conformity to the image of God. We should not have begun it ourselves, even if we could have turned

"The stone to flesh."

An angel would have been afraid to try it, even if he had been able to accomplish the change of heart: for, as he could only have influenced us by persuasion, he might have dreaded infection from long familiarity with the plagues of the human heart. No pure spirit, but "the Eternal Spirit" could deal with our spirits, long, and frequently, and deeply, without contamination and disgust. Accordingly, none of the angels can take "joy" in us, until we become penitents. Their rejoicing begins with our repentance. But wonder, O heavens! the infinitely Holy Spirit, "for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened us," without reluctance, and has kept us alive without wearying. Herein is love; not that we loved him or holiness; but that he loved us, and wrought upon our hearts, in which Satan was more welcome, and the world more precious.

When I think of the Holy Spirit, thus producing "spirit," where there was nothing but flesh, or carnal and earthly mindedness, I feel no curiosity to know the *mode* of his operations,—I am so satisfied and pleased with their effect upon the tastes and tempers of the natural mind. It is indeed, *spirit* that is born of the Spirit, when a sinner is made alive unto God, through Christ Jesus. For, from that moment, there is an absorbing concern about the divine favor and image, which proves, that, however "old things" are unseated

in the heart, and however "new things" spring up in it, as to the *process* of the change,—the former are passing away, and the latter growing. What are definitions of the modes of spiritual operations, compared with this "demonstration of the Spirit?"

This divine change whether sudden or gradual, speaks for itself, and declares its author at once, by its holy tendencies. It stops the dominion of sin, and strips all vice of its blandishments, and makes holiness rise before the mind in winning forms of beauty and pleasure, and concentrates the desires and determinations of the soul upon real goodness.

I know, alas, too well, how this new bent of the mind may be unbent again and again, for a time, by the force of temptation and circumstances; but I know, also, that it can never be forgotten, however much it may be lost by the fallen backslider, or laughed at by the reckless backslider. I have seen the latter, like a ruined gamester, affect to despise his loss; but his eye contradicted his tongue, and his smiles at his former experience were alternately ghastly and bitter. The mocker was evidently miserable!

There is a great mistake prevails, in regard to those who, "after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, are again entangled therein and overcome." 2 Pet. ii. 20. It is supposed by many, and I was one of the many long, that those who return to their "vomit and mire," after having known the way of righteousness, find enjoyment in their old sins. Enjoyment! Transgressors dwell in a dry land, and their path is hard.—"Were you such a fool," (said one of them to me when I expressed my astonishment at his apparent tranquillity, during the years in which I had no suspicion of his being a sensualist,) "as to believe my pretences? Why, sir, I never lay down a night then, without being prepared to end my misery in this world, if I should be unable to drown it by drinking. I carried hell about with me, whether you saw me canting or caricaturing." I have never been imposed on by such gentry since; nor once deceived by taking it for granted, that they were miserable, just in proportion to the loudness and frequency of their avowals of being quite at their ease. I am persuaded also, that *theoretic* as well as practical Antinomians, are utter strangers to enjoyment, however they may talk. The very ingenuity and dexterity, which they evince in their arguments about eternal sanctification, and about Christ being their personal as well as their justifying righteousness, are too unnatural to be any thing but *masks* of a bad or a burning conscience. Such *spasmodic* forms of hope, are merely indications of secret despair. A man who has a good hope through grace, never assigns bad reasons for it, nor astounds sober minds by startling perversions of truth or logic; whereas the man whose wits have been at work, and on the rack, to find out doctrinal excuses in the cross or the covenant, for an unholy hope, tells more than he intends, when he affirms that he is not unhappy in his mind, nor wretched in his closet.

But enough of this; although I could reveal much more. I just hint at these reckless experiments, that you and I may flee, as from a serpent,

from all teaching and temptations, which would reconcile us to any theory of sanctification, that is not both practical and progressive in its character. No man is "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," but "through sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience," as well as "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ." 1 Pet. i. 2.

Is this your creed and conviction? Well; just consider the love of the Spirit, in leading us into all truth on this subject. We see now, that "Christ is of God, made unto us sanctification," as well as justification, agreeably to what he taught as a Prophet, and to what he did as a Priest, and to what he demands as a King; and not contrary to all or any of these offices. We cannot hide from ourselves the fact, that he teaches us to cut off and cast away besetting sins, lest we ourselves should be cast into hell fire; that he died to save us from our sins, and to make us zealous of good works; that he will not, as the living Vine, nourish any branch in him, which beareth no fruit now, nor own at last any workers of iniquity, however they may have prophesied in his name, or eaten and drank in his presence here.

Thus it is according to the *sanctity* he taught, and atoned to secure, that we look to Christ as our sanctification. And he is so! O, it is not little nor doubtful benefit, we derive from him, in this respect. He relieves us from no duty, and winks at no sin; but he does what is infinitely better for us: he gives all the *motives*, by which the Spirit sanctifies us, and all the merit which hides our imperfections. Yes; it is his love, which the Spirit employs to make sin hateful and holiness beautiful, in our estimation; it is his cross, by which the Spirit crucifies us unto the world and the world unto us; it is his example, that the Spirit renders authoritative in our conscience and inspiring to our hearts; it is his providences, which the Spirit makes to work for our good, in taking away and preventing sin; it is his presence in ordinances and afflictions, which the Spirit employs to make us humble and watchful; it is his "well done," at the judgment-seat, and the prospect of being for ever with him and like him in heaven, which the Spirit renders a purifying hope. Thus, whilst the Spirit is our sanctifier, Christ himself is emphatically our sanctification.

There is one manifestation of the love of the Spirit in sanctifying, which, if I could express it as clearly as I feel it deeply, I should present a line of thought, that would lay hold of every true Christian it came near; I refer to the work of the Spirit, in sanctifying by afflictions. He is not slow nor ashamed to make them work together with his own sacred influence, for the promotion of our holiness. If this fact do not strike and astonish you at once, you forget that afflictions are chiefly chastisements for grieving the Spirit. It is because he has been resisted or evaded, that God takes up the rod of Providence, to correct what we would not allow him to cure by grace. Now, that the Holy Spirit should not leave us comfortless under the rod, nor leave it to work as it can upon us, even after we have quenched much of his holy fire, and stood out against his sweet influences, and almost expelled him from the tem-

ple of our hearts,—this is love that passeth knowledge. For, remember, if left to ourselves in the furnace of affliction, we should either sink or harden to a certainty. Yes; but for his watchful eye, and mighty hand, we should either "despise the chastening of the Lord, or faint when we are rebuked of him."

You do not know much about real affliction, if you do not see his wonderful love, in this condescension to our weakness and unworthiness. You will find out, however, if you live, that you have as much need of the grace of the Holy Spirit to sanctify afflictions, as to sustain and soothe under them. Yes, as much need of his power to prevent them from hardening your heart against God, as of his blessing to prevent the gospel from becoming to you "the savor of death unto death."

But I must close this essay. I cannot do so, however, without imploring you—to number—to weigh—to tell yourself, the kind and degree of sanctifying influences, which the Holy Spirit must put forth upon your heart and character, before you are "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Why; only consider how much he must do in you, and for you, even before your calling and election be sure to yourself!—And now think, O think deeply, what he must do when you are dying, in order to fit you for *any* kind of an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God, of holiness, of glory? What finishing touches he must give to the divine image, now so faint and imperfect on your soul? What ripeness he must produce, then in all the fruits of holiness, now so unripe? What a volume of holy fire he must throw into and around your spirit, in order to prepare you fully to meet God—to see the Lamb on his throne—to mingle with the general assembly of perfect spirits—to sustain the blaze and weight and work of unveiled immortality!—Quench not, vex not, grieve not, the Holy Spirit, at your peril.

No. XI.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT AS A REMEMBRANCE.

HAD not the Holy Spirit brought "all things," said by the Saviour, to the remembrance of the evangelists, neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John, could have written the gospels. Either of them, no doubt, could have written much of what they saw and heard, during their intercourse with Christ: for all his miracles were too remarkable, to be forgotten by the witnesses of them; and many of his sayings too striking, to be lost by his regular hearers. He who spake as never man spake, was thus sure to be remembered as never man was remembered, especially by his disciples. He said, however, much that they disliked, and more that they did not understand, and not a little which one hearing could hardly fix, to the letter, in any mind. His sermon on the Mount was both longer and more sententious, than the strongest memory could carry away, without copious notes, and his chief arguments with the Scribes and

Pharisees, took so many turns, in order to meet the shifting grounds and temper of his opponents, that their effect, rather than their precise form, must have been the chief recollection of even the most attentive listeners. And when his ministry became, as it did towards its close, *prophetic* as well as parabolical, and mysterious as well as solemn, his precise words became, of course, almost as difficult to remember, as they were to comprehend.

What a loss, therefore must have been sustained by the world and the church, had not the Holy Spirit so loved both, as to bring to the remembrance of the disciples, "whatsoever things" Jesus had said unto them. They themselves took no notes of his sermons or conversations, at the time of their delivery. What they seem to have remembered best, was not what was most interesting. All that has proved most useful and consoling to posterity, in the gospels, is chiefly what the writers disliked or misunderstood, until the Spirit recalled and explained it to them.

I know that it was never intended to be lost. The Saviour's gracious words, like his sacred body, could not see corruption, however they might be buried for a time. The oblivion of memory was as impossible as the oblivion of the grave, in his case. Still, his words, like his body, were "quickened by the Spirit." He, who brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ himself, brought to remembrance the truth as it is in Jesus, just as it had been spoken. John xiv. 26. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

If you have never traced the love of the Spirit in this resurrection of the truth from the grave of forgetfulness, you have not seen the compass nor the point of the Saviour's often-repeated command, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Rev. ii. 17. The Spirit not only inspired the writers of the epistles; he also inspired the writers of the gospels; and in fact, re-preached to them all they had heard from the lips of Christ. Thus the New Testament is as emphatically the word of the Spirit, as it is the word of Christ: and as strictly the word of the Father as of both: for the Son invariably declared throughout all his ministry, "The words I speak unto you are not mine, but the Father's who sent me." There is, therefore, a *threefold* inspiration upon the gospels. They are the word of the Father to the Son, and the word of the Son and of the Spirit to the evangelists; and thus the word of God to the churches and the world.

You see now how much the Spirit had to do, when the ministry of Christ closed on earth. That ministry was conducted thus: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father who sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is Life Everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." John xii. 49. Such being the case, that the word of Christ was the word of God, and all of it the word of Eternal Life, how important that none of it should be lost! But, what could

have preserved it, had not the Spirit treasured it up, and repeated it to the apostles? You remember that the wayside hearers lost it; that it was choked by the thorny ground hearers; that it withered away amongst the stony ground hearers; and that even the true disciples, who were the good ground, retained it but very unequally, and not impartially. Much of the good seed must, therefore, have been irrecoverably lost, had not the Spirit gathered it all up as it fell, and afterwards re-sown it just as it was given.

I have sometimes, in order to endear the gospel to myself, ventured to imagine, what kind of a New Testament we should have had, if the evangelists had been left to the mere resources of their own memory, and to the guidance of their own taste and discretion, when Christ left the world. And even in that case, I could not but see, that it would have been a *wonderful* book! well worth reading, preserving, and circulating throughout the world, until the end of time. Yes; had it contained nothing but just what the friends of Christ recollected, by dint of memory, it would still have been the best book in the world, and worth all that ever has been or will be expended, upon the perfect canon. It would, however, have been a very different book, in many things of very great importance. For none of the apostles liked or understood the *spirituality* of Christ's kingdom, or the *atonement* design of his sufferings and death, until these truths were again revealed to them by the Spirit. None of them had much love to children, nor any warmth of sympathy for the Gentiles, until the day of Pentecost. I will not specify what, I suspect, they would most likely have passed by or forgotten: but I see enough of both to make me thankful, that they had to speak and write "as the Spirit gave them utterance," and "in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." But for this, we might not have known, concerning little children, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" nor concerning those who only hunger and thirst after righteousness, that "they shall be filled;" nor concerning all manner of sin and blasphemy, that "it shall be forgiven;" nor concerning the love of God in the gift of his Son, that it was love to the world, as well as to the Jewish nation.

In throwing out these hints, I do not mean to insinuate that the evangelists, if uninspired, would have kept back any thing they deemed useful to the world. I think they would have meant well, even when they judged ill. They were, however, men of "like passions" with ourselves; and, therefore, had they not written by inspiration, they might have been tempted to withhold such parts of their recollections, as clashed with their natural or national prejudices. But all this, the love of the Spirit to them and us, prevented. He delivered anew to them, and through them to us, the gospel of the great salvation, just "as it began to be spoken by the Lord." Yes: just as the Saviour himself had delivered it; now in set sermons, and anon in passing hints; now in parables, and anon in promises; now in explanations of the Old Testament, and anon in new invitations of mercy and new commandments of love. For it was not an outline, nor a digest, nor the substance of what Christ had said, nor selections of the best

parts of his preaching and conversations; but "whatsoever" he had said to the disciples, that the Spirit brought to their remembrance, and opened to their understanding.

Now, to say nothing of the light which this fact throws upon the perfection of the gospels, see how it reveals the love of the Spirit to the world and the church. He refused not, grudging not, hesitated not, to repeat all that Christ had said, to encourage the guiltiest, or to cheer the timid, or to win the worst. Nothing was too good, too kind, or too strong for him to sanction. He kept back nothing, weakened nothing, shaded nothing, of all the goodness which the Saviour had ever uttered to friends or enemies. Thus we have the gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel, from the lips of the Spirit, as well as from the lips of the Son and the Father. What a glorious confirmation, as well as illustration, we thus have of the perfect concurrence and equal cordiality of the Godhead, in the glad tidings of salvation! This fact proves that the Trinity are as much one in heart, as they are one in essence, and each person of the Godhead as truly "love" as "light."

You have often read and repeated various great and precious promises, as the word of the Father, and as the word of the Son, and marked with delight how they prove their love. Well; just observe now, and remember in future, how they prove the love of the Spirit also. They came from his heart and lips, too; and that when, humanly speaking, many of them might have been lost for ever, had he not republished them to the apostles. For he thus *sanctioned* them all, as well as preserved them.

This is the point to which I would now fix your attention. The HOLINESS of the Spirit did not lead him to hold back, or to qualify, the pardons offered by Christ to the vilest and the most hopeless. The SOVEREIGNTY of the Spirit did not prevent him from repeating the invitations of Christ, in all their original width, warmth, and freeness. The SUPREMACY of the Spirit, or that entire dependence of all means upon his agency, (without which we can neither will nor do what is commanded,) did not lead him to alter one word of the Saviour's commands to repent, and believe the gospel. No; although all the power of doing so depended upon himself, he made the apostles remember and write on the subject of human duty, exactly as Christ had spoken to the world; taking care to bind upon all men, every where, the personal obligation,—“Strive to enter in at the strait gate;” “Labor for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life;” “Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” “Repent, or ye shall perish.” In like manner, the MAJESTY of the Spirit did not prevent him from reminding the evangelists, of the most condescending and tender things which Jesus had said to the despairing and the despised. No; the Eternal Spirit, like the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, was not ashamed of the contrite or the trembling; but preserved for them, and transmitted to them, all that the friend of sinners had ever said to the weary or heavy laden; to publicans or harlots; to prodigals, malefactors, or outcasts! He took care to preserve even the Saviour's dying prayer for his murderers. Thus

the Holy Spirit identified himself, heart and hand, with “all things whatsoever,” which Jesus had spoken. He did as much justice to the doctrine of the Son, as the Son did to the doctrine of the Father. Whatever Christ heard from the Father, he fully declared; and whatever Christ declared, the Spirit faithfully preserved.

You cannot be uninterested nor unaffected by these facts. They explain and justify the assertion of Christ, that the Spirit would be “another comforter.” This, however, is not all that I want to fix your attention upon, in the office of the Holy Ghost as a remembrancer. Recollect how little was known, even in Judea, concerning the Spirit. His existence and personality were far from being unknown: but, except in reference to *prophecy*, his office and operations were very little understood, when the ministry of Christ began. Remember also, how little the apostles themselves comprehended the work of the Spirit. The Saviour had actually to begin his doctrine on this subject, by speaking only of “water and the Spirit;” not of the “Truth” and the Spirit; so little did they connect the Spirit with means. He had, therefore, to put him forward, almost apart from means, in the first instance, before he could gain any thing like a fair attention to the agency of the Holy Spirit. In like manner, at the close of his ministry, or in his last great intercessory prayer, Jesus had just to reverse this order; and, that the instrumentality of truth might not seem to be displaced by the prominence formerly given to the agency of the Spirit, he said nothing about him when praying for the sanctification and preservation of the disciples; but pleaded thus, “Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth.” John xvii. 17. Now our tendency to run to extremes on this subject, is just as great as theirs was at first. The *natural* bent of the human mind is, to make means every thing, and the Spirit nothing; and the *artificial* bent of it is, to make the Spirit every thing, and means nothing. Accordingly, to prevent both extremes, the Holy Spirit left the matter just as the Saviour placed it. He added nothing to the prayer, “Sanctify them by thy truth;” and he took nothing away from the assertion, “ye must be born again of the Spirit.” He neither spoke of himself at all where Christ had said nothing, nor spoke less concerning himself, where Christ had said much. The reason is obvious, and full of love; namely, that we may use appointed means as diligently as if salvation depended upon the right use of them, and yet depend upon the Spirit as simply and entirely as if there were no means used, or none to use.

In like manner, the Spirit took no exception to any thing, however strong, which the Saviour had ever said of the fulness or the freeness of divine influence. Jesus had said, “If ye being evil know how to give good things unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask him?” and that Spirit repeated this promise exactly as Christ gave it, without demur or limitation; thus pledging himself to be the “free Spirit,” which Christ had said. So also, he took no exception to the work which Christ pledged him, although the world was its field, and the end of time its period. Jesus had said, “He shall convince the world of

sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment ;" and the Spirit put this promise in writing, as openly and willingly as Christ put it into words ; thus undertaking to be the illuminator of the world as fully as Christ was the Saviour of the world. And not less willingly did he remind the apostles of the promise, that "He shall abide for ever" in the church. He sanctioned and sealed that pledge too, although he foresaw all the labor it would involve, and all the provocation he would have to endure. His majesty took no offence at the weakness or the unworthiness of the myriads he had to teach ; nor his purity, at the vileness of those he had to sanctify ; nor his patience, at the waywardness of those he had to guide ; nor his independence, at the poverty of those he had to console. In a word, like the Saviour, the Spirit came, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

The epistles of the New Testament form another illustration and proof of the love of the Spirit. In them, he as faithfully taught the writers "all things," as in the gospels he had brought "all things" to their "remembrance." In the latter he led them back to "all truth ;" and in the former led them "into all truth."

My limits will not allow me to trace, throughout the epistles, the fulness nor the frequency with which he expanded and explained "the truth as it is in Jesus." And it is not necessary to do so. You can see at a glance, that whilst he adhered to the very letter of all that Christ taught and did, he also brought out the spirit of the whole, in new forms of argument and appeal, of power and glory, which set all the Saviour's "apples of gold, in pictures of silver."

The experimental design of this little treatise requires now, that the office of the Spirit as a remembrancer, be traced in the well known fact, that he still suggests and applies the things of Christ unto the mind. "He shall take of mine," said the Saviour, "and show it unto you." This he did to the apostles ; and the gospels were the first fruits, and the epistles the full harvest of his revealing love. He did not, however, cease to suggest nor to apply the truth, when he closed the canon of Scripture. No ; he closed the canon, to open the heart to understand and enjoy it. Accordingly, every Christian recollects well, many timely and useful suggestions of both promises and warnings, which, if they had not been brought to his remembrance by the Spirit, he must have sunk under trials or fallen before strong temptations. How true it is, that "when the enemy cometh in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him !" That repelling and protecting standard is never a *new* truth, in the sense of revelation ; but, in the sense of application, it is, although brought from the old armory, as new to the mind, as if it were created at the moment. For then, we see in some promise what we never saw before. It suits and soothes us, just as if it had been made for no other purpose or person. It takes a place in, and exercises a power over, the mind, which could hardly be greater, were it a direct communication from heaven, or an entirely new gift from the Spirit. I do not wonder, whoever else does, that such timely and tender applications of suitable promises, have

been mistaken for revelations. This was a mistake : but it is no mistake, to regard that application as the direct and immediate work of the Spirit. There is new *work*, although only the old word.

I have not a little sympathy even with the more questionable experience, which speaks of—"getting a promise"—*lighting* upon a promise—having a promise wonderfully *borne in* upon the mind." When the promise itself, and not the *manner* of obtaining it, is the source of comfort, I see no harm nor weakness in ascribing to the Spirit, the *timing* of its application. Getting hold of a promise at a critical moment, is no small blessing. In the case of those who have but little knowledge, or weak faculties, it is a very great blessing. Yes ; and even those who are mightiest in the Scriptures, and strongest in mind, are glad at times to plead before God, like David, "the word in season," upon which God had "caused them to hope," in the day of former calamity or darkness.

I am fully aware that the Spirit has often been dishonored by having ascribed to him, visionary and crude applications of insulated passages of Scripture. He applies nothing but the meaning or the sense of the word ; and that, only in its holy design. He whispers no sweet promise in the ear of the disobedient or the backsliding, except to remind them, that they dare not appropriate it to themselves. He has nothing to do with the comforts which those get from "dark sayings," who refuse to take comfort from the plain glad tidings of the gospel. It is an evil spirit, not the Holy Spirit, who leads into fanciful interpretations of Jewish history or ceremony, which the apostles have not spiritualized.

In like manner, it may be laid down as a universal maxim in the teaching of the Spirit, that he never stops at *one* lesson. Whenever, therefore, any person takes up with one promise, suddenly or signally brought home to him, and then rests his hope of pardon upon that promise, to the neglect of all other truth, it is quite certain that the Spirit of truth did not apply the comfort : for he leads into all truth, whoever he leads. This, indeed, he does gradually in almost all cases ; but in no case does he begin the lesson which does not go on, or which is not followed up by others. But whilst I readily allow and proclaim, that they are all duping, and thus ruining their souls, who are satisfied with having had a promise brought home to them at one time, whilst ever since they have paid no attention to the Scriptures, and but little to personal religion, I must contend for the experimental fact, that the Spirit does, from time to time, open and apply the Scriptures to the emergencies of the divine light, and according to the wants of the prayerful. A standing proof of this occurs in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath. It is always the case, that experimental sermons seem to some of the audience, actually made for them ; and as much to the point, as if "the man of God" had heard their family conversation in their secret prayers, in the morning. He, of course, knew nothing of either ; but the Spirit, who led them to desire and pray for a word in season, led him to the word they wanted.

There are only two things farther, which my

space will allow me to hint at. The first is, that it would be a sad abuse of the love of the Spirit, to depend on his suggestions, to the neglect of searching the Scriptures, and treasuring up the word of Christ in our hearts. Those who neglect this duty, will not find the Spirit to be their remembrancer for comfort, in the day of trouble. He will not supersede the use of the Bible by suggesting any thing, but warnings, to them who do not use it; for he is the Spirit of truth, not of impulse; and only "the Spirit of wisdom," to those who honor him as "the Spirit of revelation."

The other hint is, (and it might be expanded to a volume,) that we should find it almost as useful to go over the New Testament, looking for the mind of the Spirit, as the apostles found it to listen to the Spirit, when they wrote from his dictation. How differently the words of Christ sounded to them, when the Holy Ghost repeated and explained the truth as it is in Jesus! How often they must have said, whilst hearing the Spirit, "*How foolish and ignorant was I, when I first heard these wonderful things from the lips of Christ!*"

Why should you not go over your Testament again, marking, from page to page, the new light and loveliness, which you now see, in parts that once made no impression upon you? Why not number and review every part, which you have found experimentally true and sweet? Do mark in the *margin* of your closet or family Bible, every passage which the Spirit has ever shone upon. You will thus increase your own evidences of having been led by the Spirit; and confirm your confidence in his teaching; and meet his love to yourself by more ardent love to him than you have yet cultivated. And all this, he would soon and amply repay, by witnessing to and sealing his own work on your soul.

No. XII.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT AS A COMFORTER.

WHEN the Saviour promised to send the Spirit as a comforter, he called him, "another Comforter;" not a *different* one to what he himself had been. It is by overlooking this fact, or by not considering what kind of a comforter the Saviour himself was whilst in the world, that so many of the serious and the suffering are uncomfortable. They look for more, or for another kind of comfort, than was promised; and, not finding it, they are disappointed, and thus tempted to reckon the consolations of the Spirit "few or small." This is a sad mistake! The Spirit is always, in the case of all believers, just such a comforter as Christ himself was, when he comforted his disciples.

Look at this fact. What kind of a comforter was the Saviour to his friends, whilst he remained with them on earth? Not a "miserable" comforter, certainly: but still, as cautious as he was kind; as prudent as he was tender, he comforted his disciples, just as he taught them:—as they could bear it, and not always as they wished for it. Accordingly, when they would have called

down "fire from heaven," to punish their enemies, he not only refused their wish, but also reproved their spirit thus, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Luke ix. 55. In like manner, when they gave way to an ambitious spirit, and strove which of them should be greatest in his kingdom, Jesus rebuked them both by words and significant actions. All this, and much more, he did and said, whenever they fell into wrong tempers or habits. But, was he not their comforter, notwithstanding all the reproofs and warnings he thus gave them from time to time? They themselves felt that he was so, in the best sense: a comforter, who neither spoiled them by indulgence, nor disappointed them by caprice. Peter, no doubt, felt very uncomfortable at first, when Christ said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savorest not the things which be of God;" and equally so, when told that he would deny his Lord. The mother of Zebedee's children, and her two sons also, thought it any thing but comforting them, when Jesus refused to maternal solicitude, the right and left hand seats in his kingdom. Martha, too, found him any thing but the kind of comforter she wished and expected, when she was absorbed, beyond all reason and necessity, with worldly things. But still, none of these chastised children, thought his consolations few or small upon the whole. Accordingly, "sorrow filled" all their hearts, when Jesus began to explain to them his approaching return to heaven. The sad prospect of losing his endeared company even for a time, soon revealed to them, what a comforter he had always been!

Now it was whilst they thus remembered, and appreciated, and felt, both the *kind* and the degree of the comfort they had enjoyed for years, that he promised the Spirit as "another comforter," or just *such* another friend as he himself had been; a very present help in all real trouble: a very gentle reprover of all imaginary fears; and a very faithful monitor against whatever was sinful in conduct or temper. You thus see, that they could not mistake his meaning. It must have been as obvious to them, from their own experience of his comforts, as his promise of "Peace" was to them, when he qualified the words, "Peace I leave with you," by the additional clause, "My peace give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This timely appeal to his *own* peace, was intended to prevent all visionary dreams of earthly ease. The disciples knew well what his peace had been! Not peace arising from the absence of trials or temptations; but peace under them, and notwithstanding them all. And equally well did they know what kind of a comforter the Saviour had been: and thus they were prepared to look only for similar comfort, when the Spirit was given.

You now see at a glance, that Peter would not expect the Holy Ghost to comfort him, when he gave way to his fiery and rash temper; nor Martha, when she cumbered herself unduly with bus-tle; nor James and John, if they became ambitious again; nor any of them expect the cheering and sealing comforts of the Spirit, apart from walking in the Spirit. In a word, they would all lay their account, with finding the Holy Spirit of God just such a comforter, as they had found, by

experience, the Holy Son of God to be ; full of grace and truth : but abounding in all "wisdom and prudence," in the communication of both.

You see the bearing of these facts, as arguments, upon ourselves. You will think twice now, before you speak once again, about not being comforted by the Spirit, as you wished and expected. We have had less comfort than we looked for, no doubt ; but the question is, would the Saviour, had he been present, have given us any more, under the *same* circumstances ? It is very easy to say, and it is only too true, that our joy has not been full, nor our peace lasting, nor even our hope steady : but is it not equally true, that the Saviour himself would have left our comfort just at this low ebb, had we treated him as we have dealt by the Holy Spirit ?

We are fast—you see ! Nor can we extricate ourselves from the grasp of this general principle, by picturing to ourselves how differently we should have acted in every thing, had the Saviour been on earth, ever since we professed to be his friends and followers. Such fancies are mere fictions. We have no reason to suppose, that we should have acted a whit better than his first disciples did. The probability is, that we should have fallen oftener than Peter, and aspired more than John, and bustled more than Martha.

The wonder is, you see, that we have had any comfort from the Holy Ghost ; and not that we have had so little : for it is no more a part of his office, than it was of the Saviour's practice, to comfort at all hazards, or in spite of all circumstances. I mean, that the Holy Spirit will not wink at sin, nor connive at sloth, nor humor caprice, nor overlook worldly-mindedness. It is his great object to *cure* these faults ; and, therefore, he must correct us for them, instead of consoling us under them. And this is true kindness, as well as real prudence ! For, only think for a moment, what imprudent ministers—yea, what "almost Christians," the disciples would have been, had Christ always smiled upon them, or even been silent, when they acted inconsistently ! They were not very steady nor discreet, until the day of Pentecost, notwithstanding all the checks and warnings which they got : and, had they got none, they would either have been unfit for apostleship, or they would have had to "tarry at Jerusalem" much longer than they did, before "power from on high" had descended upon them.

In like manner it would be any thing but good for us—it would be very bad for us,—were the Holy Spirit to consult nothing but what we call "our comfort." We mean by that, happiness in prayer : times of refreshing at the sacrament ; foretastes of heaven in the sanctuary, and the prevalence of a good hope through grace at home : but, if we could make sure of all this comfort, by merely going to the closet and the sanctuary ; and, independent of our conduct and spirit during the week, we should soon be more inconsistent than we are, and eventually have as little relish for the consolations of religion, as we have now for some of its self-denying duties and sacrifices.

The historical facts we have thus reviewed, furnish us with a simple clew to both the kind and degree of comfort we may expect from the Spirit. We have now, in order to judge how he is likely

to act towards us, only to ask ourselves—what would the Saviour *say* to me,—how would he *look* on me,—how would he *treat* me, were he to meet me by the way whilst I am out in the world ; or to look in upon my family when I am at home ; or to visit me when I am sick ; or to track me between the closet and the sanctuary ? We see, at a glance, how Jesus would act, and speak, and look, in any and every case we can suppose ourselves to be ! We feel, instinctively, how his conduct, and manner, and aspect, would be regulated in every instance, by our general character and spirit at the time. We can, at this moment anticipate and tell, almost to a word, what Christ would say to us, were he to take us aside, and tell us what he *thinks* of us, as well as what he *feels* for us. I will not follow out this hint for you. You can do that for yourself. And when you do so, you will, I am sure, say of your Saviour, "He speaks peace to his people, but only in connection with the solemn charge, let them not return unto folly ?" Thus, as the Son said of himself, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also," so we may say of the Spirit, he that hath seen the Saviour, hath seen the Comforter also ;—seen how he comforts, whom he comforts, and why he comforts.

This cannot but lead you into "great searchings of heart ;" and these may lead you to suspect, that you would hear nothing from the lips, and see nothing in the looks of the Saviour but reproof. It would not be so, however, if the fear humble and pain your heart. "A bruised reed he will not break, nor quench the smoking flax." He would be faithful to your conscience ; but he would be equally tender to your spirit, lest it should "fail before him." He would rebuke you sharply, but he would "not leave you comfortless."

Now, just such has the love of the Spirit been to us all along. "The many waters" of our folly have modified and varied the manifestations of his love ; but they have "not quenched it." He has visited our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquities with stripes ; but his loving-kindness he has not taken away utterly, nor suffered his good work in us to fail entirely. It, indeed, has been carried on by him, although we have not always carried out its holy designs. But now,—what a motive—what a way—opens before us for increasing our comforts ! What "joy in the Holy Ghost," we may obtain by diligence and circumspection, now that we see clearly, that he will do all that the Saviour would do for our comfort ! O, our joy might be full, were we only willing to make room for fulness of joy, and determined to throw aside the weights which impede its progress ! for there is not a healing leaf of all the foliage, nor a ripe fruit of all the vintage of the tree of life, which the heavenly dove would not as willingly bring to our ark, and place in our hand, as the dove of the deluge did the "olive leaf" to Noah. We are not straitened in the Comforter ! But he cannot do many mighty works amongst us, because of our unbelief and disobedience.

But whilst thus magnifying the comfort which might be obtained, I do not forget what is enjoyed, nor feel ashamed to submit it even to the world, as demonstration of the love of the Spirit. I

know and deplore, that the sum of actual comfort is far less than it ought to be: but I know too, that the world can produce no such specimens of happiness as the church. It may taunt the church with the sadness of some penitents, and with the suspense of others, and with the too prevalent fear of death amongst all but dying Christians; but the saddest of all the saints would not exchange places or prospects with the happiest man of the world under the sun. Many of them are in the valley of humiliation, and not a few of them in the slough of despond, and none of them altogether free from fightings without or fears within: but the world can neither buy nor bribe them out of the valley of tears, by the wealth or the gaiety of its high places. It is not the sad, nor the doubting, nor the timid, which move when the world, unfolding her treasures and trappings, cries from her volcanic mountain-tops, "Come up hither, and be happy." No, no; those who dance to her piping, are those only whom the church of Christ stands in doubt of; and never those who suffer from the doubts and fears of an humble mind. Like the women of Galilee, at Calvary and the sepulchre, the weeping followers of Christ care least for the joy of the world; and his rejoicing followers despise it.

Be not deceived by appearances. Christians are not so uncomfortable as they seem, nor as they say at times. They do not falsify nor pretend when they complain, "that he who should comfort them is far away from them." He is far away at the time; but he is not altogether out of sight, nor out of mind: for even then, they would not give up their faint hope of his return, for any or all the comforts which life, without godliness, could furnish.

Thus I challenge the world, not from where I might throw down the gauntlet of defiance—from the sunny summits and the shady munitions of the Mount of Communion, nor from the Bethels, Pisgahs, and Olivets, which form "the borders of Emmanuel's land;" but from the valley of Achor and Baca, where trouble and weeping abound: and even there, the universal sentiment is,

"Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without Thy graces and Thyself,
I were a wretch undone."

You will now judge of the comfort administered by the Comforter, by remembering how many, in all ages, have thought it enough to compensate them for all they could do and suffer; enough to reconcile them to poverty, reproach, and persecution; and more than enough, to justify them in refusing both deliverance and rewards, when the world tried to win them from Christ.

Never forget either, when it is, that the men of the world question and despise the happiness of a Christian. It is not when they are dying, nor when they are sick, nor when they are in adversity. Then, they feel the hollowness of earthly comfort, and complain of it, in tones and terms more bitter than any Christian employs, when he exclaims, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." "Trash!—I would give it all for a day longer to care for my soul," said a rich man whom I knew,

as he pointed to coffers he could hardly count. Yes; treasure appears trash then, and the wisdom of this world folly. But the death-bed of a Christian presents no such extravagance. If he has any property, he can look at it without shame, and leave it without cursing it. It is not embittered to his family, as the price of his soul; nor, if given in charity, dreaded by the church, as a price for his salvation. Thus it is not the world's fault, if we reckon the consolations of religion "few or small." The ungodly are very faulty in caricaturing a life of piety, as dull and dismal; but they repair that fault, so far as we are concerned, by a death more dismal than the fears they once ridiculed, or more sad than the seriousness which they called melancholy.

There is another thing which ought never to be lost sight of, in judging of the love of the Spirit, as a Comforter; he comforts the church, chiefly for the sake of the world; or that she may do good to others. This is the explanation which the apostles have of their abundant and abiding comfort from the Holy Ghost. It was given, Paul says, "that we might be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Cor. i. 4. And this reason is the Spirit's rule, in the case of private Christians, as well as public ministers. Accordingly, we are solemnly charged to "comfort one another, and especially the feeble-minded." 1 Thess. iv. 14,—the faint-hearted, or dispirited.—These must not be neglected when they fall in our way, nor when we can find access to them, if we ourselves would be comfortable. The current maxim, that "we have enough to do, to take care of ourselves, without attending to the case of others," is both false, and fearfully true. They *have* enough to do, and not a little to suffer—who live only for themselves, however circumspectly they live: for even circumspection will not secure the joy of the Holy Ghost, without sympathy and zeal of some kind. All Christians cannot indeed, do the same work in the world or the church; but all can show the same goodness to both in some way. "I could not comfort my pious people," said the great and good Andrew Fuller, "however or whatever I preached to them, until they began to care for the souls of the perishing heathen."—And now, even that is not enough, to secure the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, as an abiding Comforter. Perishing souls at home as well as abroad must be pitied, and prayed for, and watched over, if we would have our own souls filled with joy or peace in the Holy Ghost. No wonder! He has a world to convince of sin; a world to convince of righteousness; a world to convince of judgment; and he will only do this by the instrumentality of those whom he has made wise unto salvation.—But then, what comfort there might be in all the churches, were they to fall in, heart and hand, with this magnificent mission of the Spirit to the world. There would soon be none of the harps of Zion upon the willows of Babylon, were Zion determined to lengthen her cords to the ends of the earth, and to strengthen her stakes amongst the dwellings of the poor at home. In reference to the neglect of this, as well as of other duties, the Spirit saith to the churches, "O, that my people had hearkened unto me: I would have fed them

with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock would I have satisfied them." Psa. lxxxi. 16. Yes; the chief reason why he does not give us more of "the hidden manna" to eat, and why he withholds the "white stone" of adoption so often, is, that we are not doing the first works of the first churches, upon a scale equal to our ability and opportunities.

This imperfect essay would be worse than incomplete, were I not to remind you, that when the "time of need" is peculiar and pressing, then the helping grace of the Spirit is both rich and free grace. At no time are we sent on a warfare at our own charges; and whenever we are sent to endure a great fight of affliction, the Comforter gives rewards as well as wages. This, as I have already hinted at the close of the chapter on sanctification, would be a perfect mystery to me—viewing, as I do, almost all afflictions as chastisement for sin, as well as trials of faith—did I not see how Christ is glorified by it. But the eyes of our neighbors, as well as of our families, are upon us, when the mighty hand of God thrusts us into the furnace; and, therefore, the Spirit takes care to sit as a Comforter as well as a refiner, that those who judge of the worth of piety by its influence in the day of calamity, may see how a Christian can suffer without murmuring, or die without fear. For it was not chiefly on our own account, that we were so wonderfully supported, at times we can never forget. It answered our purpose, quite as well as if all the mercy of the comfort had terminated upon ourselves; but like the recovery of Epaphroditus, which was mercy to Paul as well as to himself, our comfort and composure under severe afflictions, were sent to teach others, as well as to help us in time of need. How this fact exalts and endears to a Christian, the memory of his "songs in the night" of calamity! He was enabled to sing the Lord's song then, that his family and friends might learn it.

If this essay at all place the comforts of the Spirit in a more scriptural light, than you have thought of them, you will do well to review the facts of it again, in connection with the Saviour's own account of himself, whilst he was the Comforter of his disciples. Now he summed up the results of the office, as he himself discharged it, in his last prayer, thus,—“Whilst I was with them in the world, I kept them.” John xvii. 12. Thus he was a keeping Comforter. And that, the Holy Spirit is emphatically! He comforts, so as to keep us. And, in a world like this, and with such hearts as ours, and whilst all the powers of hell unite with both to seduce and ensnare, what a comfort it is to be kept from apostacy and ruin! We do not know the world, nor ourselves well, if keeping grace be not as dear to us as converting grace. Why; if we were not kept from falling into error, and from going back to the world, and from taking up with the pleasures of sin, we should soon despise the pleasures of religion, and be both unfit and unwilling to be comforted by “any consolation” which is in Christ Jesus. I do not think lightly of comfort. I know how much it is wanted, under trials and temptations. But I know, also, of something which is more wanted than strong consolation, now that strong opposi-

tion to piety is not backed by civil power, nor cheered on by popular hostility.

In a word; I shall be well pleased, and eternally thankful, to have had a *keeping* Comforter, whilst passing through a world, which is not more emphatically “a valley of tears,” than it is a vortex of temptations and snares. Comfort, indeed! If I had always been comforted, in my sense of the word, I should have made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience, years ago. The Holy Spirit loves us too well, to cheer or soothe us, when wrong tempers or habits are gaining an ascendancy over us. The prodigal's father did not go into the festive halls nor the swine-fields of the “far country,” where his foolish son had wandered. He did what was far better for him, welcome him home again, when he came to his senses.—Just so, the Holy Spirit acts, in comforting; he keeps back the ring, and the robe, and the shoes, and the fatted calf, until his prodigals are within sight of the paternal roof again. Be it, therefore, your concern and mine to be kept from apostacy and wandering; and we shall never be left comfortless. The comfort of being kept through faith unto salvation, will be comfort whilst

“Immortality endures.”

“I was kept whilst in the world,” will be as delightful a reflection in heaven, as the anticipation “I shall be kept for ever pure and happy.”

No. XIII.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT A PLEA FOR ZEAL.

WHENEVER the claims of the heathen, or of the dark places of the earth at home, are to be publicly and specially pleaded in the pulpit, or on the platform, we expect to hear powerful appeals to the love of Christ, as the all-constraining motive to zeal and liberality. A missionary sermon, of which the love of Christ was not both the foundation and the topstone, would surprise us, as well as grieve us. Yes; next to our indignation, would be our astonishment, if that mighty motive were not mightily employed, whenever the friends of Christ are called on to spread or sustain the gospel. We should say, and justly too, that the man who could advocate missions without shielding and enshrining their claims with the glories of redeeming love, had read his Bible to little purpose, and knew nothing of the high-way to the hearts of Christians. Were he a very Apollon in eloquence, we should not hesitate to tell him, that the poorest Aquila or Priscilla of the churches could teach him “the way of the Lord more perfectly.”

This recognition of the love of Christ as the grand motive for loving the souls of those who are perishing for lack of knowledge, is one of the happiest signs of our times, and one of the healthiest symptoms of the Christian church. Whilst this is the spirit of the church, the world will not be neglected by her. Its dark places will be noticed, and numbered, and prayed for, and helped,

just in proportion as this fine spirit prevails. For, happily, the love of Christ, like the blood of Christ,—

“Will never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved, to sin no more!”

Did it ever occur to you, however, that we do not ply nor employ this argument exactly as Paul did, when he besought the churches to labor and pray that the gospel might have free course, and be glorified at home and abroad? He pleaded with them by the love of the Spirit, as well as by the love of Christ. This is not common now. Why, then, are we neither offended nor surprised, although we hear nothing about the Spirit, but just that his influences are absolutely necessary, and his grace all-sufficient, to crown the gospel with success.

This is certainly much. And then, it is all to the point. Indeed, without this full recognition of the power of the Spirit, and of the entire and universal dependance of all means upon his blessing, even the love of Christ, however preached, would be confined in vain, both to the church and the world. It would neither win the souls of the perishing, nor constrain the zeal of the redeemed. But still, why should not the love, as well as the power of the Spirit, be appealed to, whenever appeals are made to us on behalf of missions and religious education? It is neither wise nor fair, to confine our attention to the need or the nature of his sacred influences, whilst his own moral nature—or essence—or heart—which is love, just as God is love, and as Christ is love—is not kept before us. We are thus tempted to look with less confidence and complacency on the office of the Holy Spirit, than on the offices of the Father and the Son. Accordingly, his agency is chiefly spoken of, rather as power we cannot do without, than as love which may be depended and calculated upon. For once that his *heart* is set before us, quivering with tender sympathy, and glowing with intense love, and thrilling with strong solicitude for souls, we are reminded ten times of his *hand*, without which “Paul might plant, and Apollos water” in vain.

Now, this is not fair. Not, however, that there is too much said of the power of the Spirit, nor that the indispensable necessity of its operation is too often or too strongly affirmed; but that too little is said of his love, and that little too seldom repeated. The consequence is, that the general feeling of the churches towards the Spirit of all grace is not a *generous* one. I mean, it is rather a solemn than a sweet feeling, and breathes more of awe than of expectation, and approaches nearer to submission than to complacency or gratitude. We do not, indeed, think him an adverse or indifferent party to the success of the gospel in the world. All our hope of its success hinges upon his good-will and great power. We look for no “increase,” apart from his blessing. But still, who speaks, or thinks, or feels, concerning the Spirit’s love to the world, as of the love of God and the Lamb? Who kindles with rapture, or even with a hope full of holy zeal, when the Comforter’s relation and love to the world, as well as

to the church, are hinted at? For, in general, they are rather hinted at than exhibited. And yet, “the world” has the same place in the heart and mission of the Spirit, as in the work of Christ or in the love of God. It is just as expressly said in Scripture, that the Comforter shall convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, (John xvi. 8.) as it is said that God so loved the world as to give his Son to be the Saviour of the world, or that Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the world. Accordingly, whenever Paul wanted to carry out or to carry on any great evangelizing measure in the world, he brought the love of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit, to bear together at once on the churches. He did not confine himself to the love of Christ, when intent upon calling forth love to the poor and the perishing, from the hearts and hands of those who loved Christ. No! mark how he pleaded with the Romans: “I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers for me.” Rom. xv. 30. He had just preached the gospel fully from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, in all places “where Christ had not been named,” and was now about to “take a journey into Spain,” for the same purpose; and therefore he craved the prayers of the church at Rome, that his missions might be prosperous. He also “trusted to be brought on his way” by that church, to his intended Spanish mission, as well as to see them by the way. Thus he wanted both the prayers and the help of the Romans, to enable him, as a debtor to the Jews and the Gentiles, to act out his commission as an ambassador of Christ to the world; and therefore he besought them at once, for Christ’s sake, and for the Spirit’s sake, to work and pray for him.

In like manner, when Paul wanted the zealous and benevolent Philipians to be more than ever they had been “the lights of the world,” and the landmarks of their own “crooked and perverse nation,” he pleaded with them thus: “If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any fellowship of the Spirit, let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” The apostle wanted them to hold forth the word of life, as well as to uphold it amongst themselves; to look upon the things of others, as well as look to their own interests; and to do both with much of the Saviour’s impartiality, even if, in doing as he did, they should suffer both pain and loss. This was a great demand upon their time, and property, and patience, and impartiality; and because Paul felt it to be so, he placed it between the double blaze of the love of Christ and the love of the Spirit, that thus the compassion of the Philipians for their own nation, and all nations, might be equal to their ability and opportunities. Phil. ii. 1.

In like manner, when Paul wanted the Ephesians to be “filled with all the fulness of God,” (or, as the Saviour expressed the same state of mind, “merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful,”) he not only brought before them the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the love of Christ, but also the witness, seal, and earnest of the Holy Spirit of promise, urging them to maintain the unity and extend the boundaries

of the church, by the plea, "There is one Spirit," therefore, "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of Redemption." Eph. iv. 15, 30.

In like manner, Paul winds up his congratulations and counsels to the Thessalonians thus—"Quench not the Spirit." He had begun his epistle by reminding them, that they had received the gospel "with joy of the Holy Ghost," and had proved this by making it sound out through Macedonia and Achaia; and, that neither their own joy might be lost, nor their zeal decline, he closes his epistle by guarding them against quenching that holy flame which the love of the Spirit had kindled on the altar of their hearts as individuals, and on the altar of their fellowship as a church.

Such, then, are the revealed facts on this subject. What is the fair inference from them? Surely, that we ought to resign our minds to the constraining influence of the love of the Spirit, as well as to that of the love of Christ, whenever we weigh the claims of a perishing world, or co-operate for the spread of the gospel. Indeed, without a due regard to the love of the Spirit, there will not be much yielding to the influence of the love of Christ. I would, therefore, urge the one motive, were it only to give force to the other; and inculcate the one duty, were it only for the sake of the other: for nothing has such a tendency to exalt and endear the love of the Saviour, and thus to throw open our hearts to its sweet constraint, as a proper sense of the love of the Comforter. It is the latter that reveals and applies the former: for, who see unscaleable heights, or unfathomable depths, or immeasurable lengths and breadths, in the love of Christ, or feel that it passeth knowledge, but those whose eyes have been opened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit? Who comprehend, "with all saints," how the love of Christ passeth knowledge, but those who have been "strengthened with might, by the Spirit, in the inner man?" And this is equally true of the love of God. Wherever it is "shed abroad in the heart," it is by the Holy Ghost. Rom. v. 5. In like manner, all our love to both God and the Lamb "is the fruit of the Spirit." Gal. v. 22.

It is impossible to weigh these facts, without feeling that it is equally desirable and necessary to give the love of the Spirit that place in our creed and confidence which it has in the word of God. But the question is, how can this be best done? For, now that we see how little his love has been noticed, there is some danger of running to the opposite extreme. We must guard against this with great care. We must never forget that it is the love of God, and the love of Christ, and not the love of the Spirit, which is chiefly exhibited in the gospel. Indeed, the promise of the Spirit is itself a part of the gospel, and his love the seal of their love: accordingly, it is never dwelt upon by the apostles, either so long or so often as the love of God and the Lamb. It is always implied, in all that is said of the reign of grace, and occasionally appealed to with great point and pathos; but it is never argued nor celebrated with the fulness or force with which Paul emblazons the love of Christ, and John the love of God. Still, the New Testament is full of it.

Like the principle of gravitation in nature, the love of the Spirit pervades every thing in grace. It does not blaze with the effulgence of the Saviour's love, nor shine with the brightness of the Father's love; but it is the steady daylight and moonlight of the church, by which she both walks and works, and without which she could do nothing for herself or the world. Let us, therefore, examine its bearings upon our duty, in reference to the spread of the gospel at home and abroad.

Now, our first duty (and all Christians, without exception, can discharge it) is, fervent prayer for the spread of the gospel. I say fervent, and I might add *special*: for a mere passing or general petition, at the close of our ordinary prayers, is not at all like what is commanded by Christ, and implored by the apostles. The Saviour added to the command, "Say, Thy kingdom come," the equally authoritative command, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." Matt. ix. 38. In like manner, it was not for vague or general prayers that the apostles called when they appealed to the churches; but for definite and agonizing prayer on behalf of specified individuals. This was Paul's own entreaty to the Romans for himself: "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye *agonize* together with me in your prayers for me." Thus, also, he besought the Ephesians: "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." Eph. vi. 19. Thus, also, he besought the Thessalonians, on behalf of himself and all his fellow-laborers,—*"Brethren, pray for us."* 1 Thess. v. 25.

These commands and requests are not fairly met, by an occasional or general petition for the spread of the gospel. Its ministers and missionaries should be named in our prayers. Our own ministers and our own missionaries should have their names engraven upon our breastplate of intercession. And for this obvious reason: prayer will not be agonizing nor fervent, until it is personal. It is not so for ourselves, until it fix upon some specific want, or wo, or danger, and concentrate itself upon the precise help we need.

But, who pray for their minister, or for missionaries, thus distinctly—earnestly? Who agonize with either, in prayer for them, that they may be faithful or successful? Again I say, that a general reference to the ministry as a body, in prayer, is mere compliment, not supplication. It might be as well omitted altogether, as despatched thus summarily and vaguely.

I should be somewhat afraid to write thus freely, were I not pleading by the love of the Spirit, as well as by the love of Christ. Such prayer is so uncommon, that its advocate needs an uncommon plea. And, happily I have one on this occasion. You know well, how much the success of prayer for yourself depends upon the Holy Spirit. You cannot even pray as you ought, nor for what is according to the will of God, unless he help your infirmities. Were he to depart from you, either as a Spirit of grace or of supplication, you would soon depart entirely from the throne of grace and become prayerless. You, therefore cannot afford to say with the slothful or the heartless, "I have

enough to do in praying for myself, without taking up the case of others specially." It would be infatuation as well as effrontery, in you, to go on with only a passing reference to your minister, or to the heralds of the cross, now that you see that agonizing prayer for them is what the Spirit demands from the churches and enforces by his own love, as well as by the love of Christ. Whilst you overlooked these facts, your ignorance might be some excuse for your neglect: but now you are without excuse. You must peril both the success and the perseverance of your prayers for your own safety, if you dare again to make that last and least in them which God has put first—that his word may have free course and be glorified.

Again, I say, you cannot afford to confine your prayers to yourself; because you cannot go on, nor keep up in the divine life, without the help of the Holy Spirit. He has now taught you a new lesson, by leading you into an old truth which many overlook; but which you can never forget, whilst you remember the love of the Spirit or your own dependance upon his grace.

I bring the matter to this point, without ceremony or circumlocution, because it is of no use now, for you or me to evade the duty thus brought before us, by pretending that we have too little time, and too much in our own case to think about, in prayer, to take any lively or special interest in the case of others. Why; the less time we have, and the more pressing our own wants are, the more we are bound to bear upon our hearts the men and the means by which God is carrying on his own kingdom. We shall not fare the worse for dividing our prayers between them and ourselves. God will take care that we shall be no losers by seeking the spiritual gain of others.—We shall both pray better and more successfully, when we become intercessors as well as supplicants. Try the experiment for a week:—and see how the love of the Spirit will enable you to wrestle and prevail for yourself, when you set yourself to agonize for and with the ministers who have the glory of God at heart. Neglect it as you have done, and see how the Spirit will leave you to sealed lips, or to comfortless prayer!

Another duty, in reference to the spread of the gospel abroad, and its efficiency at home, is liberality in the cause of Christ. I call the consecration of property to the cause of God, "liberality," because thus it is acknowledged and commended in the word of God: otherwise I durst not have given it this name: for what have we to give, which we have not received? True; we may have earned what we have, honestly and by hard industry, or inherited it legally and legitimately; but who enabled us to be industrious; who crowned honest effort with success; who spared us to inherit ancestral or family property? The Providence which did all or any of this for us, never gave us a discretionary power over what it committed to our trust. We are responsible stewards for whatever we possess. Every man is as much bound to administer faithfully what God intrusts to him, as if his property were a fund for widows or orphans. I mean, that it is no more at his option to hoard the surplus beyond what his own wants require, than to encroach on the capital of

a WILL beyond what the execution of it requires. Hence, David thanked God both for the ability and inclination to offer freely to the temple; and then added, "Of thine own have we given thee."

This is a hard saying, which will not be borne by any one who does not understand and appreciate the love of the Spirit, as well as the love of Christ. All such will, like Ananias and Sapphira, venture to "lie unto the Holy Ghost," by giving no more than what will just appear to man enough to sustain their reputation, when they are compared with others, apparently in the same circumstances.

This is a subject I would not touch, were not my chief object to warn you against lying to the Holy Ghost. It is fearfully common to join in singing hymns, which pledge the soul to give up every thing to the claims of Christ. Now, this is either mockery or perjury; for no man does sell or forsake all for the sake of Christ and the gospel. It is not very certain that it is any man's duty to do so, now that the church is large enough to evangelize the world, if she were as liberal as she could well afford to be. It is, however, (although not the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost) a sin against the Spirit, to promise or profess any liberality which is not intended nor exercised. It is no jest, nor sinless matter, of course, to sing,

"Or if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my Lord with zeal so great,
That I would give him all."

It may be cheap charity, but it is dear worship, to sing,

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a gift by far too small,"

whilst far more is expended upon the luxuries of life, than upon the poor or the perishing.

O, why is this so ill managed, even by those who, on the whole, mean well? How easy it would be for any Christian to settle the question of what he can do, and then do it as unto God, without any reference as to what man may think of it! You are deeply interested in this matter, whether you have much or little to spare for the cause of God: for both riches and poverty may prove equal snares; the former by estranging the heart from God, and the latter by hardening it against him. Nothing but the grace of the Spirit can prevent this. Why, then, not deal honestly with him? Nothing is asked or expected from us beyond what Providence enables us to do: and not to do that, is to provoke the Holy Spirit to let the world drown us in perdition. Remember; when Ephraim made it an idol, God said, "Let him alone." And, what is doing less than we can, but making an idol of what we keep back?

It is no use to quibble or equivocate: if we are not acting the part of the widow, who did "what she could" for the treasury of God, we are resisting the Holy Ghost; for one of the characteristic marks of his saving operations on the soul, is, to open the heart and the hands to the cause of Christ in the world: and if he be resisted at that point, what can be looked for, but resistance from

him at all points in which our own comfort or safety is involved? He will not submit to be mocked by empty compliments nor by selfish prayers. It is however, mere mockery to cry,

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quick'ning powers,
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours;"

if, at the same time, we are consulting nothing but our own interests. Never, but in obeying Christ, can we expect any such manifestation of his love from the Spirit. "If ye love me," says the Saviour—do what?—"keep my commandments." Yes: keep them, as well as pray for the Spirit: keep them, as well as ponder over the state of your own feelings.

Why is not this simple advice taken by all who are anxious to ascertain the sincerity of their love to Christ? That,

"It is a point we long to know!
Oft it causes anxious thoughts."

but whilst we do nothing but *think*, it will remain an unsettled point; because we can do no more than think. We can act in reference to the commandments of Christ, however poor or uninfluential we may be. We can bring the reality of our love to the test, if we have nothing to give, by keeping that command, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." And if we have it in our power to aid the kingdom of Christ, either by helping to extend it, or by assisting its poor, we need neither waste our time nor perplex our minds, in sitting in judgment upon the *feeling* of love; let us test it at once, by doing all we can for the poor and perishing. And depend upon it, if our love can make sacrifices for Christ, it is not insincere: whereas, nothing can prove its genuineness, but keeping his commandments. Love, like life, can only be demonstrated by doing or enduring.

No. XIV.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT AS THE EARNEST OF HEAVEN.

THERE is, perhaps no test of piety we are more afraid of trying ourselves by, than heavenly-mindedness; for even when we are least earthly-minded we are not exactly heavenly-minded, in the sense of desiring "to depart and be with Christ." Paul's "strait," in choosing betwixt heaven and earth, is thus a rare strait now, except in the case of very aged or very afflicted Christians: and even amongst them, it is not very common. Many "groan, being burdened," in their earthly tabernacle, who do not earnestly desire "to be clothed with their house which is from heaven." In general, the world must be desolate to us, as it was to Noah's dove, when she found no place on all its surface, for the soles of her feet, before we say from the heart, "O, that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away to heaven,

and be at rest." For although we often feel deeply that this world "is not our rest," that feeling is seldom connected with longing for "the rest which remaineth for the people of God." We must be very weary indeed, before we are willing to enter into that rest. The prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," is not grown out of use altogether; but it is not *common* prayer, even amongst the prayerful. The last enemy must come very close indeed to our bedside, before we entreat Jesus to come quickly. The "Amen" of that cry, is usually mingled with the death-rattle in the throat.

I do not forget, whilst unveiling this fact thus unceremoniously, that there are times, even when life is strong, and home happy, and the world not unpleasant, when most Christians would neither be afraid nor very unwilling to exchange worlds. Very few are utter strangers to moments of spiritual delight, concerning which they can say with truth and soberness, "I could have taken an eternity of that delightful season." But these sweet

"Moments, rich in blessing,"

are in general, but momentary. The flame of the sacrifice must be as strong as it is bright, before the soul, like Manoah's angel can spread its wings in the blaze, to ascend up to heaven at once.

This does occur, however, occasionally, both in the closet and the sanctuary. And whenever it does so, it is fully and gratefully ascribed to the "Spirit of grace and supplication." Then we do mean and feel what we say,—that the Spirit has, indeed "helped our infirmities." This, we do not hesitate to consider and call,—*"the communion of the Holy Ghost."*

I thus notice and point out distinctly, both the ordinary level at which our love of heaven rests, and the extraordinary height it can be raised to occasionally and for a moment; just that we may see clearly, what the Holy Spirit has to do, in order to produce any heavenly-mindedness in our earthly hearts; and what he can do, in carrying our thoughts within the veil, and setting our affections on things above. In both cases, he does that for us, which nothing but strong love would undertake, and nothing but great power could accomplish.

Let me still more frankly explain to you my object in these familiar hints. I am very much dissatisfied with the forgetful and reluctant tone of my own mind, in regard to heaven. I have tried not a few experiments, in order to acquire a keener relish for "the glory to be revealed," and a more settled habit of looking at the "things which are unseen and eternal." It was, indeed, for this express purpose, in my own case, that I wrote my "Eternity Realized." I called it "A Guide to the Thoughtful," and thousands in Europe and America, have received it as such: but it was written to check my own *thoughtlessness*, on this absorbing subject. I find, however, that a charm, as well as a check, is wanted, in order to keep up any thing like heavenly-mindedness. And yet, the checks upon the neglect of it, which are furnished by the word of God, are very solemn! One of them is to me, very touching and powerful: and you will never forget it, if you will

only weigh it once. I refer to the reasons which Paul assigns to the Hebrews, when explaining to them,—why God was “not ashamed to be called” the God of the patriarchs. “They desired a heavenly country; wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God.” Heb. xi. 16. Thus the apostle plainly intimates, that God would have been ashamed “to be called their God,” if the patriarchs had been ashamed to confess “that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth;” or ashamed to avow before the world, that they desired “a better country.” But they were not ashamed to do so. They said and did things which “declared plainly,” both that this world “was not their rest,” and that they sought a city which God had “prepared for them.”

What a flood of explaining and humiliating light, this one fact throws upon our experience! How often we have both wandered and wept, because we found so much difficulty in calling or considering God, as “our God!” How often have you and I said, “If God were, indeed, my God, in covenant, or in Christ, would he not manifest himself to me as such, or as he does not manifest himself unto the world?”

“When I can say, my God is mine,
When I can feel his glories shine,
I tread the world beneath my feet,
With all that earth calls good or great.”

but how seldom, and how slightly this occurs!”

You see one great reason of this now. You have not only been ashamed to avow before the world your desire for a heavenly country; but you have been very slow of heart to cherish that desire; and, therefore, God has very properly been ashamed to reveal himself to you, as your God in Christ. For how could he be otherwise? Consider this. How can the Heavenly Father manifest himself with propriety, as *our* Father, whilst there is little or nothing heavenly in our spirit or conversation? If our “Father’s house” is hardly ever thought of, except as a far off and final refuge from hell, how can our Father’s heart take much interest in our comfort?

I will not strain this point, nor turn it too sharply against you. Like myself, you may have found much difficulty, even when trying to set your thoughts and affections on heavenly things. You may have deemed it useless, if not presumptuous also, to meditate on heaven, whilst you could hardly see how you could obtain either a title or meetness for that glorious inheritance. Well; if you would really be glad to think often of heaven, could you only see your own warrant and welcome to hope for it, remember, that the Holy Spirit himself is “the earnest of the inheritance,” even when his comforts are not exactly foretastes of heaven.

I did not make this distinction, in the essay on the love of the Spirit in sealing believers. There I wrote just as we usually talk and think on the subject, when we are not absorbed with it. But, now that we are much ashamed and not a little afraid, because of our want of heavenly-mindedness, I must be explicit, and say at once, that the Spirit himself, and not his comforts, is the earnest of the inheritance. Dr. Owen has drawn this

distinction, with his usual precision and prudence: “So much as we have of the Spirit, so much have we of heaven in present enjoyment, and so much evidence of its future fullness. He is in all respects, completely an earnest. For that a thing be an earnest, it is required that it be a part of the whole, of the same kind and nature as the whole; and, that it be a confirmation of a promise and appointment:—first, the whole is promised; then, the earnest is given for the good and true performance of that promise. God gives us the promise of eternal life. To confirm this, he giveth to us his Spirit,—which is as the first part of the promise, to secure us of the whole. It is the Spirit himself *personally* considered, that is said to be the earnest.”—*Owen on Communion with the Holy Ghost.*

It is by overlooking this simple fact, that so many of the timid and tempted are afraid to look at heaven, as their own home. It is not the Spirit himself, but “strong consolation,” which they reckon the earnest: whereas, he himself is so, whether comforting or humbling, whether cheering or checking us. As Owen says, “so much as we have of the Spirit, so much have we of heaven.” That great and good man knew his Bible too well to say,—so much as we have of comfort, so much have we of heaven. He knew also, that meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, is as truly going on in the soul, when the Spirit is carrying on our humility, or our penitence, or our sense of dependance, or even our sense of utter weakness and unworthiness, as when he is carrying us “out of the body,” by an abundance of revelations; or within the veil, as upon eagles’ wings. It is not, indeed, so easy to regard the Spirit as the earnest of heaven, when he is thus, as it were, burying us in the dust of self-abasement, or leading us through fires and waters of conflict, as when he is witnessing to our adoption, or ministering to our comfort: but even then, he is leading us to the “wealthy place;” for these emptyings, and straits, and struggles, are as really preparations for the rest and rapture of glory, as the peace or the joys which are the foretastes of heaven. We have, therefore, the earnest already, just in proportion as we have the Spirit himself leading and sanctifying us. The good work he is carrying on in us, warrants us to carry out our thoughts and hopes, to “glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life:” for our spiritual discernment, is heavenly light; our spiritual desires, heavenly taste; our spiritual character, heavenly purity; just in proportion as we judge, and feel, and act, above earthly principles and motives.

It will not do, to think of heaven merely or chiefly as rapturous joy, or as perfect peace, when judging of the love of the Spirit in becoming the earnest of heaven. Heaven is worship as well as joy; and he is the earnest of it, whenever he helps our infirmities in devotion, by enabling us to pray with the heart, or to praise with the understanding. Yes; it is always heaven begun on earth, and going on too, whenever we get beyond formality in devotion, and somewhat into the spirit of worship. All the Sabbaths, and sacraments, and seasons of prayer, which are not “a weariness” to us, are preludes to that perfect

worship, by which the saints in glory serve God, "day and night without weariness." We may not call them preludes nor pledges of heaven; but they really are so. Their remote connection with eternity, is not lessened by their immediate bearings upon time. Their present influence upon our character and steadfastness in this world, is, indeed, what we notice oftentimes and feel most; but they anticipate the future, as well as help at present.

In like manner, all lively interest and willing efforts for the glory of God on earth, are heaven begun on earth. Never say nor suspect, that the Holy Spirit of promise is no earnest of the inheritance to you,—if you have ever rejoiced over the repentance of a sinner; or ministered with delight to the wants of a dying Christian; or gone willingly to bless little children; or put your hand to the plough of doing good in your neighborhood; or had your heart warmed when good news came from a far country. All this is part of the bliss of angels. It is more. It is "the joy of thy Lord" himself! Whilst Jesus was going about "doing good" on earth, he hardly felt himself to be *out* of heaven. Hence he called himself, "the Son of man, who is in heaven." And there is nothing more heavenly in Paradise itself, than a deep interest in the glory of God on earth.

Tell me not, therefore, and let no one tell you, that the Spirit is not much the earnest of heaven now. Tell those who say this, that he was never so much the earnest of the heavenly inheritance, since the apostolic ages, as now. It is not the heaven of their Bibles they are thinking of, who cannot see in the church, the hope of glory, now that the habits and alms of the glorified are so prevalent in the church. All her relations to the poor and the perishing throughout the world, whether by sympathy or zeal, by good-will or by enterprise, are identifying relations with all around the eternal throne, and even with the Godhead upon the throne.

The Spirit not the earnest of heaven! Who then raised up hundreds of thousands of Sunday school teachers, who, like the Lord of glory, welcome little children to their arms and their hearts? Who then sent out into the lanes and alleys, the garrets and cellars of our towns, the thousands who, like him, "stand at the door and knock," that they may be invited in to counsel and console? The Spirit, not now making believers "partakers of the glory to be revealed!" Grieve him not by this ungrateful and unjust charge: for what are our Bible and Missionary Societies, now immovably planted at home, and immutably pledged to the world, to fill the whole earth with the glory of the Lord, but *incarnations* of the love, the benevolence, and the zeal of heaven?

Those who cannot see in all this, any thing of heaven on earth; or who would recognise more of it in dazzling visions and mental raptures, are more *Mahometanized* than they intend or suspect. They refine, certainly, upon the Turkish Paradise, who conceive of heaven as mental pleasure only; but they are not heavenly minded, who see no glory in rejoicing with angels over the repentance of sinners; nor in joining with "the souls under the altar," in crying, "how long" shall Babylon stand? nor in preparing for the consum-

mation which shall fill the universe with the grand "Alleluia! the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ."

I will not go on writing, as if I had always looked at heaven in this light; nor as if I thought that this strain would fall in at once, and as a matter of course, with your habitual views of heaven. For even if you are prepared to throw your thoughts, in future, into this channel, you cannot afford to detach them from any of the common ideas of heaven, as a place of rest, and reward, and purity, and perfect felicity. These sweet and soothing views of our Father's house, are just as necessary to sustain us under trials and temptations, and in order to keep up the spirit of home piety and secret devotion, as more enlarged and practical views of heaven are, in order to inspire and regulate public duty. He is not doing nor enduring much in the personal Christian warfare, (whatever be his public bustle,) who never needs to lay a throbbing head nor an aching heart, upon the soft pillow of eternal repose.

I have no sympathy, certainly, with sleepy or lazy notions of the "rest" of heaven; but I have no respect for the piety, which has no longings for moral perfection, or no relish for the prospect,

"There shall we see His face,
And never, never, sin."

If, therefore, I am at all teaching you a new lesson, I am not setting you to unlearn any old one. For again, I say, you cannot afford to give up any of those familiar ideas of heaven, to which the soul turns when weary and heavy laden, and by which the heart is soothed and healed, when torn with care, or bleeding with sorrow. The things which are unseen and eternal were made visible to faith, that patience might counterbalance the things which are seen and temporal, when they are trying; and that watchfulness might counteract them, when they are ensnaring and flattering.—Never forget this fact. But do remember another. You have the earnest of the Spirit at home, when you live with your family as "heirs together of the grace of life;" in the circle of your pious friends, when you live and love as children of one Father; in the fellowship of the church, when your heart mingles, and your hand acts, with those who are preparing for heaven; and in the communion of the universal church, when you sustain her evangelizing enterprises, or share in her "joy of harvest at home" or abroad.

This is the kind of heaven upon earth, which is most wanted for the world, and best for the church. It answers all the purposes which the raptures of retirement did, when cells and solitudes were almost the only places in which heaven could be realized; and it does what no secret joy ever can do, add to the bliss of heaven, by adding to the number and variety of the heirs of glory.

Do, adjust your hopes and habits as a Christian, to the state of things which the dispensation of the Spirit has brought on in the world and the church. You cannot make nor see your way to heaven *alone*, as your fathers did. The voice of a world crying for "help," was not sounding on the four winds of the world, in their time. Bel

had not bowed down, nor Nebo stooped, nor Ethiopia stretched forth her hands unto God, nor Buddh and Bramah began to totter on their thrones, nor the islands of the sea to wait and weep for missionaries, when our fathers, as pilgrims and strangers, found the smallest and obscurest houses of God, "the very gate of heaven." Neither Grecian chapels nor Gothic cathedrals can be so now, except the glorious gospel sound forth *from* them, as well as in them. Churches must be the lights of the world, and the salt of the earth now, if they would find their ordinances or their fellowship, "the savor of life unto life."

In a word; the Spirit is the earnest of the *whole* inheritance of glory, and not of that part of it which falls in most with our taste. Think of this! What do we more than the world, when we think of heaven, only as a better world, where sorrow and sighing will for ever flee away, and where there will be no more death or separation? We require, indeed, to take and to keep this view of the heavenly rest; for we have both cares and sorrows which need this antidote. But we have no more right to confine the work or the witness of the Spirit to the hopes which are popular, than to confine his teaching to the truths which are most pleasing. His office as a Guide is, to "lead unto all truth;" and his work, as the earnest of heaven, is to bring down glory to the heart, in those forms which the circumstances of the world require most, and which the church wants most. It is not, therefore,

"In secret silence of the mind,"

now, that the church can find, most readily, her "heaven," or her "God." She must look for them in working, as well as in watching.

No. XV.

ON COMMENDING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE Saviour always took care to couple the assertion, "ye must be born again," with some *kind* assurance, which made the grace of the Spirit appear as free as it is necessary; and free just because necessary. Even to the woman of Samaria, he said,—"If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Thus he wooed her attention to the work of the Spirit. In like manner, he preached to Nicodemus all "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel," in connection with the doctrine of regeneration. Neither the ignorance nor the cavils of Nicodemus, prevented the Saviour from throwing the love of God and the glory of the atonement, like a rainbow, around the work of the Spirit. "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life," was the "*small still voice*" which followed the thunder,—"Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God." The man was told, at the same time, and as often,

that everlasting life was free to all who would believe on Christ for it.

Thus the Saviour dealt with *individuals*, on this solemn point. In the same way he dealt with *groups* of his stated hearers, when he taught them to pray: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Thus the Spirit is presented as the paternal gift of God, and as more surely forthcoming, in answer to prayer, than even food is to our children, when they apply to us.—Now, this is the form and the spirit in which the necessity of the renewing of the Holy Ghost, should be spoken of by those who would honor him, or bring sinners to submit to Christ. He stands in the same relation to their spiritual wants that household bread does to the wants of our children: and that is not certainly, a discouraging connection. Who would deny bread to a hungry child? Much more will not a paternal God withhold his Spirit from them that ask him. This is an appeal which all classes can understand, and somewhat appreciate too; it comes home so directly to the bosom and business of both young and old, rich and poor.

And now remember how the Saviour preached the work of the Spirit to the *multitude*. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cried with a loud voice, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive." John vii. 37. This appeal was made to "*any man*" amongst all the assembled thousands of Israel, although the people had just said to Christ, "Thou hast a devil;" although many of them wanted to kill him, and some of them "sought to take him." Neither their malignant blasphemy, nor their murderous designs, prevented him from crying, "with a loud voice, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." This he spake of the Spirit to *them*! To whom, then, should we speak of him in warning only? How few cases can come before us in which it is not our first duty to point to him as standing at the fountainhead of the river of life, saying, "Come; whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." This would be imitating Christ. Whereas, to tell men of their need of the Spirit, without showing them the fulness and freeness of his grace, is almost to contradict Christ.

It is easy to say, "Who enforces the necessity of being born again of the Spirit, without at the same time informing and assuring the unregenerate, that his redeeming grace is free grace, and certainly forthcoming in answer to prayer?" This is, indeed, happily true now, upon a large scale—but still, the improved tone of the pulpit has not improved the tone of public opinion very much yet. The delaying and the undecided still manage to remain "at ease in Zion," by excuses drawn from their want of the Spirit, or from the sovereignty of his influences. Now, although there be no mode of treating this subject which would put an end to all excuses, still the number of them might be reduced, and the character of the rest changed. An unconverted man should not have it in his power to say, or insinuate, or suspect,

that he cannot help his unregeneracy. This, however, he will pretend, whilst the work of the Spirit is oftener presented to him as a work of *power* than as a work of love. Calling it even "a work of grace" will not cure him; for he understands by grace, not sovereign favor, in the scriptural sense of that expression, but *favoritism*—and, therefore, regards the Spirit rather as a mighty eagle, sailing and alighting arbitrarily, than as a gentle dove, fond of the habitations of men, and for ever hovering around them. Take any man who is halting between two opinions, and try him upon this point, and you will find that it is not as the dove of love, but as the eagle of power he is resisting the Holy Ghost. I mean, he does not think that he is standing out against a heart full of love, and a hand full of grace, to himself. He does not believe that the Spirit loves him at all. He may have some idea that the Holy Ghost has *designs* upon him in the way of alarming, humbling, and checking him; but nothing is fur-

ther from his thoughts than the idea of the Spirit designing or desiring to comfort him. The Saviour knew that this suspicion is "in man;" and, therefore, he calls the attention of the world to "what the Spirit saith unto the churches;" that whoever had "an ear to hear," should hear for themselves both the promises and warnings addressed to the churches. This was a fine measure for commending the love of the Spirit to the world, and for securing attention to his impartiality. So much had been said to the churches in the apostolic epistles, about the care, and kindness, and tenderness of the Comforter towards them, and so little, comparatively, of the breathings or bearings of his love to the world, that the apocalyptic epistles were added to prevent the very suspicion of partiality. Hence, whilst each of them is addressed to a specified church by Christ himself, all of them are re-addressed to the world thus, "he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

THE END.

THE
REASONABLENESS
OF
CHRISTIANITY,
AS DELIVERED IN
THE SCRIPTURES.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED
AN ESSAY ON THE UNDERSTANDING OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES;

AND
A DISCOURSE ON MIRACLES

✓
BY JOHN LOCKE.

WITH A
BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY, AN APPENDIX,

AND NOTES
BY A LAYMAN.

NEW-YORK:
THOMAS GEORGE, JR., SPRUCE STREET.
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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

THOUGH it is by no means our design to present the reader, on the present occasion, with a complete biography of Locke, it may perhaps be useful, before we come to a consideration of the reasonableness of Christianity, to glance, in a cursory manner, at the principal circumstances of his life, which was strikingly marked by sudden vicissitudes and mutations of fortune. This distinguished philosopher, the elder of two sons, was born at Wrington, in Somersetshire, on the 29th of August, 1632. He probably imbibed from his earliest years a hatred of arbitrary power, his father having, during the civil wars, been an officer in the republican army; which, on the restoration, caused considerable detriment to his fortunes. Locke, received from the beginning, a very superior education; and, though treated with much strictness while a boy, was gradually, as he grew up, permitted to share the friendship of his father, whom he loved with more than ordinary affection. He was sent, at an early age, to Westminster school; from whence, in 1651, he removed to Christ-church, Oxford, of which the celebrated independent, Dr. Owen, was then dean.

The scholastic philosophy, based upon an imperfect interpretation of the works of Aristotle, which, at that period, prevailed in our universities, excited his aversion. He therefore, for some time, directed his studies into a different channel, and employed himself in acquiring that intimate knowledge of classical literature, which afterwards, when he came to write, enabled him to rival the first authors of modern times in the perspicuity and masculine beauties of his style. Contrary to what might have been expected, his university friends were not selected from among those of learned and studious habits; he preferred, it is said, the lively and agreeable; and his early manner of writing is not free from those sallies of affectation, mistaken by the vulgar for wit, which may be supposed best to have pleased such companions; indeed his recent biographer, Lord King, compares the style of his youthful correspondence to that of Voiture.

The love of philosophy was at length awakened in his mind by the works of Descartes; but, instead of adopting the ingenious system of that writer, then exceedingly popular among the learned, he betook himself to the assiduous study of the sciences, more particularly of medicine, in which he made so great a proficiency that, but for the feebleness of his constitution, it is probable he would ultimately have practised as a physician. Sydenham, in physic the greatest name perhaps of modern times, speaks of him, in the dedication prefixed to his "Observations on the History and Cure of Acute Diseases," as his most intimate friend, and as a man who, for genius, penetration, and exact judgment, had scarcely any superior,

and few equals, among his contemporaries. It was not without reason, therefore, that he valued the approbation bestowed by Locke on his method of cure, which still continues to be regarded as a model; but from this circumstance to infer, as Dugald Stewart has done, that the merit of this method belonged in part to the philosopher, hardly appears to be warranted.

On the restoration, in 1660, Locke, then in his twenty-eighth year, wrote a political work, not wholly uninfluenced with the spirit of the times, which his maturer judgment condemned to oblivion. His merit having now procured him many friends, he was chosen, in 1664, to accompany, as secretary, Sir Walter Vane, envoy to the elector of Brandenburg; and from Cleves, where he chiefly resided during his stay abroad, amused his friends with lively descriptions of the Christmas mummeries of the Roman Catholics, of Calvinistic logicians, and Dutch poets; in which he exhibited more vivacity than good taste. Returning to England early in the spring of 1665, he rejected an offer, the accepting of which might have permanently engaged him in the career of diplomacy; nor could an invitation to enter the church, with very flattering prospects made in the following year, by a friend, prevail on him to relinquish his personal freedom and independence, which he regarded as the first of blessings.

Emancipated from all professional pursuits, he continued the study of medicine, and entered with his characteristic enthusiasm for knowledge, into a course of experimental philosophy. At this period he would appear to have been sometimes consulted by his friends and others as a physician; and to his knowledge of medicine he owed his introduction to the earl of Shaftesbury, then lord Ashley, with whom, notwithstanding the veering politics of that celebrated man, he maintained a friendship interrupted only by death. Lord Ashley, who was suffering from an abscess in his breast, came to drink the waters of Astrop at Oxford, where Locke then resided. He had written to Dr. Thomas to procure the waters for him on his arrival, but this physician happening to be called away, requested Locke to execute the commission. Through the negligence of the messenger sent to procure them, the waters however were not ready, and Locke waited upon his lordship to explain. Satisfied with the apology, and charmed by his conversation, lord Ashley expressed his desire to improve an acquaintance thus accidentally commenced; and the friendship with which he was honored by Locke, is perhaps the strongest presumptive proof existing that his character contained the elements of many good and excellent qualities.

From Oxford, Locke accompanied lord Ashley to Sunning-hill Wells, and afterwards resided

some time with him at Exeter-house in the Strand, where he occasionally enjoyed the society of the duke of Buckingham, lord Halifax, and other distinguished men, who appeared to delight in his superior style of conversation. From an anecdote related by Le Clerc, however, it would seem that those noblemen sometimes took refuge from philosophy in the most frivolous pastimes: for several of their number once meeting at lord Ashley's, sat down somewhat abruptly at the card-table; upon which Locke, taking out his tablets, began attentively to write, lifting up his eyes, and regarding them from time to time. Observing him thus occupied, one of the party inquired what he was writing? To which Locke replied, that being greatly desirous of profiting by their lordships' discourse, he supposed he could not be better employed than in registering the wise sayings which dropped from persons who were esteemed the greatest wits of the age. And thereupon he read the notes he had been making. Finding they appeared to no great advantage in the philosopher's report, the card-table was abandoned, and the remainder of the evening given up to conversation; an amusement more worthy of rational creatures.

Lord Ashley was not without reason attached to his illustrious guest, by whose advice he submitted to the operation—the opening of an abscess in the breast—which saved his life; after which he omitted no occasion of consulting him, even in the closest and most intimate concerns of his family. And in 1672, when, after filling the office of chancellor of the exchequer, he was created earl of Shaftesbury, and declared lord chancellor of England, he appointed Locke his secretary for the presentation of benefices; which, with another office in the council of trade, the philosopher resigned in the following year, when his friend, abandoning the court party, placed himself at the head of the opposition. Lord King, whose work, however, contains much fewer original documents than might have been desired, brings forward several letters and other evidences of the intimate friendship that existed between these celebrated individuals. Shaftesbury, it is clear, personally loved the man; this appears from the tone of their correspondence, where we discover, on all occasions, not merely great freedom and mutual confidence, but an indication that their friendship was far stricter and more intimate than would seem to be implied in their language. “We long to see you here,” says the earl, in 1679, “and hope you have almost ended your travels. Somersetshire, no doubt, will perfect your breeding; after France and Oxford, you could not go to a more proper place. My wife finds you profit much there, for you have recovered your skill in Cheddar cheese, and for a demonstration have sent us one of the best we have seen. I thank you for your care about my grandchild, but having wearied myself with consideration every way, I resolve to have him in my house; I long to speak with you about it. For news we have little, only our government here are so truly zealous for the advancement of the Protestant religion, as it is established in the church of England, that they are sending the common prayer-book the second time into Scotland. No doubt

but my lord Lauderdale knows it will agree with their present constitution; but surely he was much mistaken when he administered the covenant to England; but we shall see how the tripodes and the holy altar will agree. My lord of Ormond is said to be dying, so that you have Irish and Scotch news; and for English, you make as much at Bristol as in any part of England. Thus recommending you to the protection of the bishop of Bath and Wells, (whose strong beer is the only spiritual thing any Somersetshire gentleman knows,) I rest your very affectionate and assured friend.”

Locke had from the beginning been afflicted with ill-health; but in 1675, his asthma grew so troublesome, that it was judged necessary he should remove to a warmer and less changeable climate. He therefore crossed over into France; and on the way to Montpellier, which had been fixed on for his residence, kept a journal, in which he very minutely described whatever he considered worthy of notice. Some portions of this journal, after it had lain upwards of a century and a half in obscurity, lord King has communicated to the public; and notwithstanding, nay, perhaps, in consequence of the extraordinary changes which have taken place in France, the interest of these specimens is so great that few, we believe, can fail to regret the not being put in possession of the whole.

From several parts of this journal it is abundantly apparent, that in all his travels nothing so deeply interested Locke as what concerned religion generally. Into the condition of the Protestants in France, exposed to the oppression of a persecuting government, and the wanton insults of an ignorant and bigoted populace, he also inquired with persevering sympathy, and has recorded many curious facts, which ought not to be overlooked in a history of the church. It must at the same time be confessed, that even the Huguenots themselves were not wholly free from the persecuting spirit; for not long before Locke's arrival, an Arian was apprehended, seemingly at their instigation; and had he not, upon his trial at Toulouse, denied the truth of the accusation, and made profession of orthodoxy, would have been burnt alive.

The early opening of spring in the south, where he experienced considerable warmth even in January, seems to have afforded our philosopher very particular pleasure. Picturesque descriptions of external nature were not at that time in fashion; but his concise allusion to the beautiful orange-groves of Ilyeres forcibly reminds us of the far more luxuriant paradises of Rosetta and the Land of Goshen, where the banana, the citron, the lime, and the orange, intermingle in charming confusion with the graceful palm and the majestic sycamore. “Below the town,” says he, “the side of the hill is covered with orange-gardens; ripe China oranges in incredible plenty, sometimes nine or ten in a bunch. These gardens form the most delightful wood I had ever seen; there are little rivulets conveyed through it to water the trees in summer, without which there would be but little fruit.”

Having remained fourteen months in the south of France, Locke proceeded, in March, 1677, to

visit Paris, where he was treated with much distinction by the learned and the great. Here he continued until the July of the following year, when he again returned to the south; but, after a brief stay, finally quitted it for England; having been recalled, it is supposed, by his friend Shaftesbury, then at the head of the administration.—However this may be, he arrived in London on the 8th of May, 1679, and for some time resided in Thanet-House, Aldersgate street.

But that troublesome complaint which, in 1675, had been the cause of his leaving England, soon compelled him to quit London, and the ensuing winter was spent partly at Oxford, and partly in Somersetshire. Locke now entered deeply into the politics of the times, and being invariably ranged on the popular side, became exceedingly obnoxious to the court. Liberty, however, was unprosperous; and Argyle, Russel, and Sydney fell victims to their exertions in its cause; but Shaftesbury, after a very narrow escape, towards the close of 1682, took refuge in Holland, where shortly after his arrival he died. His body was conveyed back to England, and interred at St. Giles's in Dorsetshire, "where Locke attended the funeral of his patron and friend." In the August following, conceiving that he was no longer safe in Great Britain, he also went into voluntary exile in Holland.

By an illegal order of the king, and the servility of the dean and chapter—for the university itself seems to stand acquitted—Locke was in 1684 deprived of his studentship at Christ-church. But this wretched display of authority could by no means appease the resentment of his majesty. Shelton, the English envoy at the Hague, was instructed to demand that Locke, with several other refugees, who were described as traitors and miscreants, should be given up to the royal vengeance; so that the author of the Essay on the Human Understanding was by day compelled to conceal himself like a brigand, and only venture forth for air and exercise under the cover of darkness.—During this period he was engaged in writing his Letter on Toleration, a subject which had for many years occupied his thoughts.

In the meantime William Penn, and the Earl of Pembroke—the same to whom the Essay on the Human Understanding was afterwards dedicated—exerted their influence to soften the rancor of James II., against the friend of Shaftesbury; but Locke was much too prudent to rely on the seeming forgiveness of a Stuart, and remained in Holland until the Revolution of 1688 rendered his return safe. He arrived in England in the same fleet that brought over the Princess of Orange; and was shortly after, by Lord Mordaunt, whom he had known in Holland, (now one of William's ministers,) offered to be employed as envoy to one of the great German courts; but refused the appointment, assigning as a reason the weakness of his health, which would not, he said, permit him to drink to excess—a qualification he considered indispensable in an ambassador who would obtain any influence in Germany.

He now published his Essay on the Human Understanding, which during eighteen years had formed his principal occupation: the dedication to the Earl of Pembroke is dated May the 24th,

1689; but a short abridgement of the work, in French, had appeared in the preceding year. Buhle, therefore, who, in his History of Modern Philosophy, states that the first edition of the Essay was published in 1694, is altogether incorrect; the whole of the first impression having been sold, and a second issued as early as 1693.

As the philosophical spirit exerted, at that period, an active and extensive influence in Europe, it is by no means remarkable that the Essay should have excited much attention. The philosophy it contained was bold and novel, and tended to subvert, in a great measure, the fashionable hypotheses; consequently the alarm was sounded on all sides, and the better to refute his positions, it was attempted to be shown that the most fearful consequences inevitably flow from the principles he sought to establish. The more charitable were willing to suppose him ignorant of the direct tendencies of his own doctrines; others imagined themselves to have discovered in the whole scope and design of his work, an attempt to advance the cause of irreligion by imperceptibly sapping the foundations of Christianity, and spreading the mists of scepticism over the fountains of all our knowledge. Even among his intimate friends there were those who felt shocked at his denying the existence of innate* ideas. Shaftesbury, author of the "Characteristics," in England, and Leibnitz, on the Continent, attacked the new philosophy, endeavoring, in different ways, to show its principles to be dangerous or untenable. Stillingfleet, the celebrated Bishop of Worcester, likewise ranged himself among the opponents of Locke, and his death is said to have been hastened by the signal defeat he sustained in the controversy. The same thing is related of Salmasius, against whom Milton directed that vehement burst of eloquence—the Defence of the People of England. But little credit is due to such traditions; and, as a biographer of the poet judiciously observes, our great defenders of freedom can very well dispense with such testimonies in their favor.

To clear the way for the reception of his system, Locke perceived the necessity of demolishing, from the foundations, the doctrine of innate ideas

* By using the term *innate* in an improper sense, Hume is led to consider our "impressions" innate, and our ideas not so. He bestows the term impression upon "our more lively perceptions: when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will;" and then he tells us these impressions are innate—that is, were born with us, and were, consequently, in our minds before we had heard, or seen, or felt, or loved, or hated, or desired, or willed. I must confess I can perceive, in his speculations on the origin of our ideas, none of that subtlety and acuteness for which he has obtained credit; nor can I think him justified in accusing Locke of making use, like the schoolmen, of undefined terms, and drawing out his disputes to a tedious length, *without ever touching the point in question*. I admit he is sometimes tedious,—and who is not?—but cannot discover that he is so without ever touching the point in question. On the contrary, it is by touching it too frequently, by viewing it again and again, in various lights, that he seems to become tedious; and every conscientious seeker after truth, by his eagerness to carry conviction into the mind of the reader, is liable to lay himself open to this charge.

—those *κοινὰι ἐννοιαί*, on which philosophers had, until then, been accustomed to build so much of their hypotheses. The question, besides its natural difficulty and obscurity, had been surrounded by prejudice with a circumvallation of imaginary dangers to religion; and the fears previously, by well-meaning but unphilosophical persons, entertained, were rather aggravated than diminished, when, on reading the Essay, they discovered the startling novelty of his theory of conscience, morals, virtue and happiness. Besides, from over-eagerness to establish his views, Locke has too easily admitted the existence of whole nations of atheists; for had he, with his usual accuracy, scrutinized the relations of those travellers upon whose testimony he on these points relied, he would have found them filled with mistakes, arising from the grossest ignorance of the people whose indistinct and uncertain opinions on the most abstruse questions of theology they had undertaken to explain.

However, in developing his system he sometimes inadvertently availed himself of the support of doubtful or imaginary facts, nothing can be more certain than that he completely succeeded in overthrowing the hypotheses which he combated. Leibnitz, indeed, whose whole life was spent in patching up and contending for extravagant and exploded systems, undertook, as has already been said, the defence of innate ideas; but this did not hinder mankind from perceiving the truths advanced by Locke, though fears were still entertained that many evils of unknown magnitude might thence ensue. Many seemed, in fact, to apprehend that he meditated nothing less than the total subversion of virtue and religion; for ignorance had long identified with the cause of the altar the errors which he labored to remove. To obviate, therefore, the prejudices that might arise from this supposition, he was careful to manifest, at every step of the inquiry, his unfeigned, deep-rooted reverence for the things of God; and this feeling, in him, was so habitual, so much a part of the character and constitution of his mind, so indissolubly linked with his earliest and most cherished associations, that he would have found it far more difficult to conceal than to display it. Accordingly, it may with the strictest veracity be said that no philosopher, not even Plato himself, who placed all true happiness in the knowledge of God, was ever more intimately convinced of the truths of religion, or more thoroughly imbued with its divine spirit, than the author of the Essay on the Human Understanding.

But, had it been otherwise, had he marshalled all the powers of his splendid intellect against Christianity, what other destiny could have awaited him than that which has overtaken so many others? How unworthy, and weak, and vain, are the fears which good men sometimes entertain for their religion! Certain exceptions, indeed, appear to forbid the universal application of what follows; but, upon the whole, it is most true that the religious feeling is as much a part of human nature as reason or imagination. Religion began with the beginning of man in Eden; it has survived the successive revolutions of many thousand years; it has defied persecution; it has triumphed over despotism; it has, in all ages, been the com-

panion of those master-minds, which for their loftiness, and purity, and holiness, may perhaps without impiety be said, during their earthly pilgrimage, to have walked with God. It has likewise humbled itself and become the inmate of the meanest cottage, and cheered the laborer in his labor, the poor man in his poverty, the sick upon his bed; it has been the friend and the support of the widow and the fatherless, and those who had none to help them; it has wiped away the tears from the eyes of affliction; it has comforted the despairing; it has seated itself where all other succor would be vain, beside the couch of the dying, and smoothed their pillow and mitigated their pangs, and poured the oil of gladness into their souls, and become their counsellor and advocate and surety with God. And shall we fear for religion? Shall we entertain apprehensions for that which can never cease but with the total extinction of all finite, or at least of all rational and intelligent creatures, which must leave the Deity alone in the immeasurable universe?

But not only was Locke under the influence of the religious spirit,—he embraced precisely that modification of it which constitutes Christianity; and every where, in the midst of the profoundest speculations, suffers to appear manifest indications that he possessed a soul in pious humility, and above all knowledge prized that which has been through Jesus Christ revealed to mankind. Indeed, the Essay on the Human Understanding may be regarded as a religious book. Throughout, together with an ardent love of truth, we find the most earnest inculcation of contentment and holiness of life. Our faculties, feeble and limited as he shows them to be, are always represented sufficiently powerful to discover the track of duty which he believes us able and free to follow; and no one, perhaps, ever perused attentively the chapter on infinity without being smitten with involuntary awe; without intimately experiencing the truth uttered by the apostle, that in God we live, and move, and have our being; without feeling himself borne beyond the utmost limits of the universe, into those immeasurable realms of space, where the Spirit of God still appears to brood o'er the vast abyss and make it pregnant. Passing from this sublime subject to the consideration of power, of which the human mind seems incapable of conceiving any other than a very dim and obscure idea, he demonstrates that our notion of spirit is certainly not less if it be not more clear than our notion of body; and in a brief passage, not perhaps wholly free from inconsistency, drops the first hint of Berkeley's theory, according to which nothing exists for us but as it is perceived.

Nevertheless, not being able to deny that irrational animals think; and being unwilling to suppose in them a spiritual soul, or impiously to conceive a limit to the power of God, he expresses his belief that the Almighty might confer on matter the faculty of thinking. Hence the cry of irreligion which was raised against him in his own times, and has, among certain persons, been kept up to the present day. But, in pretending to decide what God can or cannot do, we make very free, as Butler observes, with the Deity; and, perhaps, in pushing our inquiries into these awful questions, are not altogether free from impiety;

very little reflection would, at least, serve to show that, in all such conjectures, we are endeavoring to pass the bounds which the Almighty has prescribed to our understanding, and must therefore for ever be baffled in the vain attempt.

It is very different when we reason on the matter of fact. Setting aside, for the present, that portion of the inquiry which relates to the inferior animals, it seems capable of demonstration that the human soul is a monad, indiscerptible, and, as far as our experience extends, unchangeable. All philosophers, we believe, agree that the material particles or atoms which compose our bodies are in a state of perpetual change, something new being constantly added, while, what previously formed a portion of our system, detaches itself and passes away in insensible perspiration; so that in seven years, according to some calculations, the matter of which our bodies consist is wholly renewed. In this mutation the brain, of course, participates; consequently, in the man of to-day there remains not one particle of the matter of which his body, seven years ago, consisted. In this respect he is as different from his former self as from Eteocles or Polynices. Yet, though all the matter in his organized system be changed, there is something in the man which remains unchanged; something that links him with his youth, with his boyhood, with his infancy, in which memory and consciousness inhere, which survives the repeated vicissitudes of his frame, and properly constitutes himself. This something cannot be matter, for it has already been shown that, under this supposition, there could be no identity, and consciousness would be impossible. For, allowing, for the sake of argument, that it is the brain which receives from without ideas of sensation, and within forms those of reflection by contemplating its own operations; the impressions made on it could last no longer than itself: but it is admitted that the material particles composing the brain are in a state of constant flux, and come, in the course of years, to be wholly changed; the material particles which depart would, therefore, were they the depositaries of our ideas, carry away with them all the impressions they had, while in the brain, received; it would in fact be palpably impossible these should remain when the substances on which they had been impressed were detached: but we find that ideas are not thus fleeting; that they continue to exist in the mind forty, fifty, nay, in some men, a hundred years: the substance in which our ideas are deposited remains, consequently, the same from youth to age; but the matter of our bodies is perpetually changing; therefore the human soul is not material.

Another view of the question may equally serve to convince us of this truth. If the soul were material, it must, like all other material substances, consist of extended solid parts, and might be divided *ad infinitum*. Suppose, however, it consisted only of five parts, corresponding with the number of the senses; each part would receive its peculiar ideas; but being separated from its neighbor by the infinite gulf which divides plurality from unity and diversity from identity, it could never communicate what it had received, unless we erect each portion of the soul into a distinct intelligence, endowed with separate consciousness, and means of

imparting thought; which, in reality, would be to imagine so many souls, and to destroy the oneness and individuality of man. For, how could part A obtain cognizance of what part B experienced? There would be an absolute necessity to suppose another intelligence, apart from this cluster of material souls, and essentially one and indivisible, in which might centre, as in a point, the converging rays of intellectual light; or, to speak without a figure, the several trains of ideas transmitted inward by the senses.

Interpose, therefore, as many material apparatus as we please between the external world and the substance that thinks within us, it is but imagining a circle within a circle; we must at last come to a monad, or unity, unextended and indivisible. That which has distinct separate parts can never think. There will always be an absolute necessity, not only for a *vinculum*, or connecting principle, distinct from the parts themselves,—and what it is that binds together the particles of matter has never been explained,—but likewise for something essentially one, which may take cognizance of the movements and operations of the material organs by which it externally manifests its energies, and through which it receives ideas of what exists beyond the circle of its own consciousness. Had this view of the question presented itself to Locke, it is probable he would have discovered its perfect consistency with the phenomena of thought; and have thence inferred that, unless it should please God to confer on matter other qualities than it now possesses, that is, to change its nature, it must for ever remain incapable of thinking.

In tracing the connection of the Essay on the Human Understanding with religion,—which our limits enable us very imperfectly to accomplish,—it would be unpardonable to overlook its rigorous demonstration of the existence of a God. It is indeed humiliating to our reason that there should be individuals whose opinions render such a demonstration necessary. But this is the case,—indeed many ingenious men have amused the world with doubts of their own existence;—and since it is so, we must endeavor to show that nature supplies us with lights the possession of which renders doubt on this subject wholly inexcusable.

It is often objected by the lovers of novelty that the proofs and arguments made use of in this demonstration are hackneyed; and so they are. And if a man should now go about to show that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones; or that ten and three and seven are equal to twenty, what could he say that would not be hackneyed? Truth, and our mode of approaching it through syllogisms, and the circumstances of nature, and the make and powers of one mind, remaining nearly the same, how can we,—if truth be our object, and, we would not, for novelty's sake, embrace error,—do otherwise than repeat, in our own manner indeed, the arguments which have heretofore been employed by others for the same purpose? Hippias of Eleia, a man celebrated in antiquity for his aversion to old truths, once made himself merry with Socrates upon the monotony of his opinions; and in return was complimented by the philosopher on the wonderful versatility which enabled him constantly to shift the bases of his

thoughts, and to decide, on the self-same question, now one way, and now another.*

Locke in this resembled Socrates, that he felt no aversion to embrace truths because they had been previously embraced by others. He was not desirous of startling, but of instructing mankind. And being persuaded that real knowledge is conducive to real happiness, he dissembled no truths which he appeared to have discovered, and scorned, on all occasions, to dress up popular errors in the guise of eternal verities, either for the purpose of eluding persecution, or acquiring for himself the advantages of power. We may be sure, therefore, that he was most earnest in the pursuit, and most honest in the disclosure of what he conceived to be truth; and, accordingly that, in his demonstrations of the existence of a God, we behold, not the arguments of a cold, subtle metaphysician linked together for display, but the reasoning of a man whose warm conviction gives weight to every proof, and infuses through the whole composition a vigor and vitality not to be found in the unsatisfactory ratiocinations of a sophist.

Did the space requisite for the due consideration of other topics permit, we would willingly have introduced in this place the whole of the incomparably splendid chapter to which we have been alluding. But all we have room for is an extract, which may, however, induce the reader, if he should happen not to be already acquainted with it, to have recourse to the Essay itself. Having observed that, though the evidence of the existence of a God be equal to mathematical certainty, it yet requires thought and attention, and that the mind should apply itself to a regular deduction of it from some part of our intuitive knowledge, he proceeds:—"I think it is beyond question that man has a clear idea of his own being; he knows certainly he exists, and that he is something. He that can doubt whether he be any thing or not, I speak not to, no more than I could argue with, pure nothing, or endeavor to convince non-entity that it were something. If any one pretends to be so sceptical, as to deny his own existence, (for really to doubt of it is manifestly impossible,) let him for me enjoy his beloved happiness of being nothing, until hunger, or some other pain, convince him of the contrary. This then, I think, I may take for a truth, which every one's certain knowledge assures him of, beyond the liberty of doubting, viz. that he is something that actually exists.

"In the next place, man knows by an intuitive certainty, that bare nothing can no more produce any real being, than it can be equal to two right angles. If a man knows not that non-entity, or the absence of all being, cannot be equal to two

right angles, it is impossible he should know any demonstration in Euclid. If, therefore, we know there is some real being and that non-entity cannot produce any real being, it is an evident demonstration, that from eternity there has been something; since what was not from eternity had beginning; and what had a beginning must be produced by something else.

"Next it is evident, that what had its being and beginning from another, must also have all that which is in, and belongs to its being from another too. All the powers it has must be owing to, and received from, the same source. This eternal source then of all being must also be the source and original of all power; and so this eternal being must be also the most powerful.

"Again, a man finds in himself perception and knowledge. We have then got one step farther, and we are certain now, that there is not only some being, but some knowing intelligent being in the world. There was a time then, when there was no knowing being, and when knowledge began to be; or else there has been also a knowing being from eternity. If it be said, there was a time when no being had any knowledge, when that eternal being was void of all understanding; I reply, that then it was impossible there should ever have been any knowledge: it being as impossible that things wholly void of knowledge, and operating blindly, and without any perception, should produce a knowing being, as it is impossible that a triangle should make itself three angles bigger than two right ones. For it is as repugnant to the idea of senseless matter, that it should put into itself sense, perception, and knowledge, as it is repugnant to the idea of a triangle, that it should put into itself greater angles than two right ones.

"Thus from the consideration of ourselves, and what we infallibly find in our own constitutions, our reason leads us to the knowledge of this certain and evident truth, that there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing being; which whether any one will please to call God, it matters not. The thing is evident, and from this idea duly considered, will easily be deduced all those other attributes, which we ought to ascribe to this eternal being. If, nevertheless, any one should be found so senselessly arrogant as to suppose man alone knowing and wise, but yet the product of mere ignorance and chance; and that all the rest of the universe acted only by that blind haphazard, I shall leave with him that very rational and emphatical rebuke of Tully, to be considered at his leisure: 'What can be more silly arrogant and misbecoming, than for a man to think that he has a mind and understanding in him, but yet in all the universe beside there is no such thing? or that those things, which with the utmost stretch of his reason he can scarce comprehend should be moved and managed without any reason at all.'"

It has been well observed by an eminent Christian philosopher of our times, that "in philosophy equally as in poetry, genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the stalest and most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Truths, of all others the most awful and mysterious, yet being at the same time of universal interest, are too often considered as so true that they lose all the powers of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors."—*Friend*, vol. i.

* De Legib. lib. ii. Cicero's words are:—"Quid est enim verius, quam neminem esse oportere tam stulte arroganter, ut in se mentem et rationem putet inesse, in cælo mundoque non putet? Aut ea quæ vix summa ingenii ratione comprehendat, nulla ratione moveri putet?"

"From what has been said, it is plain to me, we have a more certain knowledge of the existence of a God, than of any thing our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say, that we more certainly know that there is a God, than that there is any thing else without us. When I say we know, I mean there is such a knowledge within our reach, which we cannot miss, if we will but apply our minds to that, as we do to several other inquiries."

Much has, at different times, been written on the style of the Essay on the Human Understanding. According to Dugald Stewart, it resembles that of a well-educated man of the world, rather than of a recluse student, "who had made an object of the art of composition;" from which it may be inferred that, with Locke, the art of composition had not formed an object of study. But, whoever shall duly consider his remarks on Particles, in the seventh chapter of the third book, will certainly conclude that no recluse student could ever attach more importance than he did to style. What his opinion was of the language in use among men of the world, he has also taken care, in many places, to express; more particularly in book the third, chapter the eleventh, where, contending for the proper use of words he says,— "This exactness is absolutely necessary in inquiries after philosophical knowledge, and in controversies about truth; and though it would be well, too, if it extended itself to common conversation and the ordinary affairs of life, yet I think that is scarce to be expected." Farther on he observes, "that propriety of speech is that which gives our thoughts entrance into other men's minds with the greatest ease and advantage;" and to this he is careful to add, that "the proper signification and use of terms is best to be learned from those, who, in their writings and discourses, appear to have had the clearest notions, and applied their terms with the exactest choice and fitness."— From which it seems evident that the art of composition commanded no inconsiderable portion of his attention; so that if, after all, his style resembles that of a well-educated man of the world, who had never regarded language with a rhetorician's eyes, it must be concluded that the care and pains he bestowed on this part of his studies was utterly thrown away.

Walter Savage Landor, himself a writer remarkable for the vigor and originality of his language, runs, in speaking of Locke, into the opposite extreme, giving his style the preference in comparison with that of Plato. But this decision is still more paradoxical than Dugald Stewart's. Of all prose authors, Plato is perhaps the one who has most excelled in the management of language, which he has invested with every beauty, of which it appears to be susceptible in unmetrical composition; his style successively adapting itself with equal facility to the highest flights of the imagination, the most abstruse inquiries in metaphysics and the liveliest and homeliest sallies of familiar badinage. If we can conceive Shakespeare's language applied to philosophical investigations in all its poetical fervor, power, and flexibility, but divested of its quaintness, it might give us some idea, though still but a faint one, of the splendor and inexhaustible variety of Plato, which to those

who can be delighted with intellectual beauty, render the study of his writings a passion and a luxury. To pretend to discover all these excellencies in the style of Locke would be absurd affectation. It has, however, great beauties; and of these not the least is that admirable perspicuity—in Aristotle's opinion the chiefest excellency of language—which almost always enables us rapidly to seize his meaning, even in those passages where the nature of the subject might have appeared to excuse some degree of obscurity. There is besides in most of his compositions, a masculine strength, an earnestness, a warmth,—distinct from the warmth of passion,—arising evidently from the force of his convictions, from the intimate persuasion that what he advances is based on truth; and the combination of these qualities, united with the grandeur and importance of the ideas, rises, in many parts of the Essay, into a noble eloquence, still more strikingly perceptible in the "Conduct of the Understanding," and the vehement refutations of error in the "Treatise on Government." At the same time it must not be dissembled that the construction of his sentences is often destitute of all grace; and that the prejudice against figurative language, which at one time possessed him, led too frequently to the employment of a bald unvarnished form of expression, wholly incommensurate to the magnitude of his ideas. From this charge Lord Bacon himself,—next to Milton the most figurative prose writer in our language,—is not wholly free, as any one who reads the History of Henry VII. and several of his other works, will perceive. But the defect is more apparent in Locke, who from a false theory studiously, during many years, labored to deprive his works of the advantage and charm derived from the judicious use of tropes and figures.

To proceed, however, with our outline of his life. "The occupations which now engaged the attention of this great man," says Lord King,— "were of the most varied and opposite description. He was at the same time a practical politician, and a profound speculative philosopher; a man of the world, engaged in the business of the world, yet combining with all those avocations the purity and simplicity of a primitive Christian. He pursued every subject with incredible activity and diligence; always regulating his numerous inquiries by the love of truth, and directing them to the improvement and benefit of his country and of mankind."

He now, in defence of the rights of the people, published his work on Government; and in the following year, 1690, a Second Letter on Toleration, in which he further developed the principles of religious liberty. About this time, it is supposed, he became acquainted with Newton, Sir John Somers, and the celebrated Earl of Peterborough, with whom, when either happened to be absent from London, he kept up a regular correspondence. With Newton also he occasionally corresponded; and there have been preserved and published several letters of this great man, partly relating to his "Account of the Corruptions of Scripture," which prove at once the irritability, goodness of heart, ingenuousness, and constitutional timidity of that *Lux altera gentis*.

In 1691 Locke published his "Considerations

on the Lowering of Interest," to which, in 1695, further considerations, forming a second part, were added. His object, in this work, was to demonstrate the injustice of raising the denomination and lowering the standard of the currency; and in the great recoinage of 1695 his advice was followed, and the current money of the realm restored to the full legal standard. He at the same time anticipated the conclusion, if not the arguments, of Bentham, in his "Defence of Usury;" showing that all attempts at regulating the rate of interest increase the difficulty of borrowing, while they prejudice none but those who need assistance. He was in this year, rather as a compliment than as a reward for his labors, nominated a member of the Council of Trade, an honor which, on account of his increasing infirmities, he during the following year resigned.

Though the feebleness of his constitution was incompatible with that continued residence in London, which the duties of a public office might have required, it seems by no means to have interfered with his literary labors; for in 1695 appeared his "Reasonableness of Christianity;" and in the following year, his first and second Vindications of this work, together with his then celebrated letters to Stillingfleet, in defence of the Essay on the Human Understanding. Locke now resided with Sir F. and Lady Masham, at Oates, near Ongar, in Essex; where he enjoyed, what he appears always to have highly valued, the society of an intellectual and fascinating woman. Lady Masham was the daughter of Cudworth, author of the "Eternal Principles of Morality;" and there had subsisted for many years an intimacy between the philosopher and this amiable family, as appears from a letter addressed, in 1683, to her Ladyship's brother in Hindoostan. Locke's fondness for voyages and travels is well known. He in fact preferred them to almost every other kind of books; and, in this letter, we find him inquiring curiously about the tricks of the Indian jugglers, "which," says he, "must needs be beyond legerdemain;" the notions of the Brahmins, concerning spirits and apparitions; and their religious opinions and ceremonies, of which he had obtained a tolerably correct idea from Bernier, with whom he was personally acquainted. He also desired to learn whether any copies of the Old or New Testament, in any language, existed among the oriental nations previous to their communications with Europeans, consequent upon the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope.

In this agreeable retirement he spent the last four years of his life, engaged in the study of St. Paul's Epistles, on which he composed a commentary, published among his posthumous works. Though struggling with an incurable disease, his temper continued calm and unruffled. His interest in the welfare of his friends was unabated. Cheerful, but resigned to his fate, he saw death approach without perturbation: he had lived like a Christian, and hoped to meet, in another world, with a Christian's reward. In the month of October, 1704, it became evident that his dissolution was at hand; and on the 27th, Lady Masham, not meeting with him in his study, went to his bedside, where she found him worn down and

exhausted, and never expecting to rise again. He told her his earthly career was now terminated, and that in comparatively few hours he should be no more. To those present he wished all felicity; and to Lady Masham, who lingered in his chamber longer than the rest, he expressed his gratitude to God for the great happiness he had tasted in his life; but added that he now found all here below was vanity; exhorting her to consider this world only as a state of preparation for a better. He overruled her desire to sit up with him, observing, that he might perhaps be able to sleep, and would send for her, if any change should happen. Continuing awake all night, however, he in the morning was removed into his study, where he enjoyed a short sleep in his chair. He then desired to be dressed, and Lady Masham again coming to him he heard her, with great attention, read a portion of the Psalms; but feeling the near approach of death, stopped her, and a few minutes afterwards breathed his last, about three o'clock of the 25th of October, aged seventy-two years and two months.

Le Clerc, who, in the French manner, composed the eulog of Locke, concludes it with the character of the philosopher, derived from a person who knew him well, probably Lady Masham herself. This, with Lord King, we adopt as a judicious and excellent portraiture of the man:—"He was," says she, (and I can confirm her testimony in great measure, by what I have myself seen here,) "a profound philosopher, and a man fit for the most important affairs. He had much knowledge of belles lettres, and his manners were very polite and particularly engaging. He knew something of almost every thing which can be useful to mankind, and was thoroughly master of all that he had studied; but he showed his superiority by not appearing to value himself in any way on account of his great attainments. Nobody assumed less the airs of a master, or was less dogmatical; and he was never offended when any one did not agree with his opinion. There are, nevertheless, a species of disputants who, after having been refuted several times, always return to the charge, and only repeat the same argument. These he could not endure, and he sometimes talked of them with impatience; but he was the first to acknowledge that he had been too hasty. In the most trifling circumstances of life, as well as in speculative opinions, he was always ready to be convinced by reason, let the information come from whomsoever it might. He was the most faithful follower, or indeed the slave of truth, which he never abandoned on any account, and which he loved for its own sake.

"He accommodated himself to the level of the most moderate understandings; and in disputing with them, he did not diminish the force of their arguments against himself, although they were not well expressed by those who had used them. He felt pleasure in conversing with all sorts of people, and tried to profit by their information; which arose not only from the good education he had received, but from the opinion he entertained, that there was nobody from whom something useful could not be got. And indeed by this means he had learned so many things, concerning the arts and trade, that he seemed to have made them his

particular study; inasmuch that those whose profession they were, often profited by his information, and consulted him with advantage. Bad manners particularly annoyed and disgusted him, when he saw they proceeded not from ignorance of the world, but from pride, from haughtiness, from ill-nature, from brutal stupidity, and other similar vices; otherwise, he was far from despising whom-ever it might be for having a disagreeable appearance. He considered civility not only as something agreeable and proper to gain people's hearts, but as a duty of Christianity, which ought to be more insisted on than it commonly is. He recommended, with reference to this, a tract of Messrs. de Port Royal, "*Sur les Moyens de conserver la Paix avec les Hommes*;" and he much approved the sermons he had heard from Mr. Whichcote, a doctor of divinity, on this subject, and which have since been printed.

"His conversation was very agreeable to all sorts of people, and even to ladies; and nobody was better received than he was among people of the highest rank. He was by no means austere; and as the conversation of well-bred people is usually more easy, and less studied and formal, if Mr. Locke had not naturally these talents, he had acquired them by intercourse with the world: and what made him so much the more agreeable was, that those who were not acquainted with him, did not expect to find such manners in a man so much devoted to study. Those who courted the acquaintance of Mr. Locke, to collect what might be learnt from a man of his understanding, and who approached him with respect, were surprised to find in him not only the manners of a well-bred man, but also all the attention which they could expect. He often spoke against railery, which is the most hazardous part of conversation if not managed with address; and though he excelled in it himself, he never said any thing which could shock or injure any body. He knew how to soften every thing he said, and to give it an agreeable turn. If he joked his friends, it was about a trifling fault, or about something which it was advantageous for them to know. As he was particularly civil, even when he began to joke, people were satisfied that he would end by saying something obliging. He never ridiculed a misfortune or any natural defect.

"He was very charitable to the poor, provided they were not the idle or the profligate, who did not frequent any church, or who spent their Sundays in an ale-house. He felt, above all, compassion for those who, after having worked hard in their youth, sunk into poverty in their old age. He said, that it was not sufficient to keep them from starving, but that they ought to be enabled to live with some comfort. He sought opportunities of doing good to deserving objects; and often in his walks he visited the poor of the neighborhood, and gave them wherewithal to relieve their wants, or to buy the medicines he prescribed for them if they were sick, and had no medical aid.

"He did not like any thing to be wasted: which was, in his opinion, losing the treasure of which God had made us the economists. He himself was very regular, and kept exact accounts of every thing.

"If he had any defect, it was the being somewhat passionate; but he had got the better of it by

reason, and it was very seldom that it did him or any one else any harm. He often described the ridicule of it; and said that it availed nothing in the education of children, nor in keeping servants in order, and that it only lessened the authority which one had over them. He was kind to his servants, and showed them, with gentleness, how he wished to be served. He not only kept strictly a secret which had been confided to him, but he never mentioned any thing which could prove injurious, although he had not been enjoined secrecy; nor could he ever wrong a friend by any sort of indiscretion or inadvertency. He was an exact observer of his word, and what he promised was sacred. He was scrupulous about recommending people whom he did not know, and he could not bring himself to praise those whom he did not think worthy. If he was told that his recommendations had not produced the effect which was expected, he said, that it arose from his never having deceived any body by saying more than he knew, that what he answered for might be found as he stated it; and that, if he acted otherwise, his recommendations would have no weight.

"His greatest amusement was to talk with sensible people, and he courted their conversation. He possessed all the requisite qualities for keeping up an agreeable and friendly intercourse. He only played at cards to please others, although from having often found himself among people who did, he played well enough, when he set about it; but he never proposed it, and said it was only an amusement for those who had no conversation.

"In his habits he was clean, without affectation or singularity: he was naturally very active, and occupied himself as much as his health would admit of. Sometimes he took pleasure in working in a garden, which he understood perfectly. He liked exercise, but the complaint on his chest not allowing him to walk much, he used to ride after dinner: when he could no longer bear the motion of a horse, he used to go out in a wheel-chair; and he always wished for a companion, even if it were only a child, for he felt pleasure in talking with well-bred children. The weak state of his health was an inconvenience to himself alone, and occasioned no unpleasant sensation to any one, beyond that of seeing him suffer. His diet was the same as other people's, except that he usually drank nothing but water; and he thought his abstinence in this respect had preserved his life so long, although his constitution was so weak. He attributed to the same cause the preservation of his sight, which was not much impaired at the end of his life; for he could read by candle-light all sorts of books, unless the print was very small, and he never made use of spectacles. He had no other infirmity but his asthma, except that four years before his death he became very deaf, during a period of about six months. Finding himself thus deprived of the pleasure of conversation, he doubted whether blindness was not preferable to deafness, as he wrote to one of his friends; otherwise he bore his infirmities very patiently." "This," as Le Clerc says, "is an accurate, and by no means a flattered description of this great man."

The views which Locke, after a patient and la-

borious examination of the Scriptures, was led to take of some of the leading doctrines of Christianity, appear to have been substantially the same as those of Milton and Sir Isaac Newton. Truth was, on all occasions, the object of his researches: he valued it above all things; and the diligence of his inquiries was proportioned to the importance of their aim. But, that he should always have attained to the knowledge of truth, who shall affirm? particularly on those awful subjects where the vast interests every man has at stake render it incumbent on him to trust the decisions of no judgment but his own; which, considering the natural inequalities discoverable in human intellect, and the wonderful diversities of human character, must necessarily give rise to error; though doubtless the sincere seeker will always find so much of truth as may be necessary to his eternal salvation. "A holy life," says Jeremy Taylor, "will make our belief holy, if we consult not humanity and its imperfections in the choice of our religion, but search for truth without designs, save only of acquiring heaven, and then be as careful to preserve charity, as we are to get a point of faith. I am much persuaded we should find out more truths by this means; or however (which is the main of all) we shall be secured though we miss them; and then we are well enough.*"

This was the course pursued by Locke in composing the Reasonableness of Christianity. He had discovered the inconsistencies and unsatisfactoriness of the ordinary systems of divinity; and not to consult "humanity and its imperfections" in the choice of his religion, he betook himself to the diligent study of the Scriptures, which he found to contain doctrines clear and intelligible, and adapted to the apprehension of the bulk of mankind. From the title and general tone of the work, we should have inferred that it was chiefly addressed to those professors of Christianity who overlook its precepts to dwell upon its mysteries, and seem desirous of setting faith and reason in opposition to each other; who think they can never have enough to believe, though far too much to practice; who, confident in their imagined strength, rush in "where angel's fear to tread;" enter dogmatically into the secret designs and purposes of God; rashly seek to lift the veil from those things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive;" and, not even yet content, set themselves up as infallible in their way, and require all men to adopt their opinions, and hazard their salvation on the soundness of their judgments. This is what, from a perusal of the work, we should have supposed. But, in the preface to the Second Vindication, Locke himself gives us the history of the book, and an explanation of his views in composing it. Addressing himself to the Rev. Mr. Bold, who, without being personally acquainted with him, had undertaken his defence, he says:—"Since you seem to me to comprehend what I have laid together, with the same disposition of mind, and in the same sense that I received it from the holy Scriptures, I shall, as a mark of

my respect to you, give you a particular account of the occasion of it.

"The beginning of the year in which it was published, the controversy that made so much noise and heat amongst some of the Dissenters, coming one day accidentally into my mind, drew me, by degrees, into a stricter and more thorough inquiry into the question about justification. The Scripture was direct and plain; and it was faith that justified: the next question then was, What faith that was that justified; what it was which, if a man believed, it should be imputed to him for righteousness? To find out this, I thought the right way was, to search the Scriptures; and thereupon betook myself seriously to the reading of the New Testament, only to that purpose. What that produced, you and the world have seen.

"The first view I had of it seemed mightily to satisfy my mind, in the reasonableness and plainness of this doctrine; but yet the general silence I had in my little reading met with, concerning any such thing, awed me with apprehension of singularity, till going on in the gospel history, the whole tenor of it made it so clear and visible, that I more wondered that every body did not see and embrace it, than that I should assent to what was so plainly laid down, and so frequently inculcated in holy writ, though systems of divinity said nothing of it. That which added to my satisfaction was, that it led me into a discovery of the marvellous and divine wisdom of our Saviour's conduct, in all the circumstances of his promulgating this doctrine; as well as of the necessity that such a lawgiver should be sent from God for the reforming the morality of the world; two points that, I must confess, I had not found so fully and advantageously explained in the books of divinity I had met with, as the history of the gospel seemed to me, upon an attentive perusal, to give occasion and matter for. But the necessity and wisdom of our Saviour's opening the doctrine (which he came to publish) as he did, in parables and figurative ways of speaking, carries such a thread of evidence through the whole history of the evangelists, as I think is impossible to be resisted; and makes it a demonstration, that the sacred historians did not write by concert, as advocates for a bad cause, or to give colour and credit to an imposture, they would usher into the world; since they, every one of them, in some place or other, omit some passages of our Saviour's life, or circumstances of his actions, which show the wisdom and wariness of his conduct; and which even those of the evangelists who have recorded, do barely and transiently mention, without laying any stress on them, or making the least remark of what consequence they are, to give us our Saviour's true character, and to prove the truth of their history. These are evidences of truth and sincerity, which result alone from the nature of things, and cannot be produced by any art or contrivance.

"How much I was pleased with the growing discovery, every day, whilst I was employed in this search, I need not say. The wonderful harmony, that the farther I went disclosed itself, tending to the same points, in all the parts of the sacred history of the gospel, was of no small weight with

* Liberty of Prophesying, p. 5.

me and another person, who, every day, from the beginning to the end of my search, saw the progress of it, and knew at my first setting out that I was ignorant whither it would lead me ; and therefore, every day, asked me, what more the Scripture had taught me ? So far was I from the thoughts of Socinianism, or an intention to write for that or any other party, or to publish any thing at all. But when I had gone through the whole, and saw what a plain, simple, reasonable thing Christianity was, suited to all conditions and capacities ; and in the morality of it now, with divine authority, established into a legible law, so far surpassing all that philosophy and human reason had attained to, or could possibly make effectual to all degrees of mankind, I was flattered to think it might be of some use in the world ; especially to those who thought either that there was no need of revelation at all, or that the revelation of our Saviour required the belief of such articles for salvation, which the settled notions and their way of reasoning in some, and want of understanding in others, made impossible to them. Upon these two topics the objections seemed to turn, which were with most assurance made by Deists against Christianity ; but against Christianity misunderstood. It seemed to me, that there needed no more to show them the weakness of their exceptions, but to lay plainly before them the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles, as delivered in the Scriptures, and not as taught by the several sects of Christians."

The reader, acquainted with the circumstances of the philosopher's life, aware of the extent of his knowledge, the brilliance of his genius, the singular vigor and keenness of his judgment, his love of truth, and indefatigable diligence in the search of it, may now proceed with confidence to the study of the Reasonableness of Christianity. He will find in the language a plainness and simplicity reflected from the Scriptures themselves. No opinion is advanced but what seems based on some text : no fine-spun inferences are drawn from doubtful expressions. The discourses of Christ and his apostles, as far as possible according to the order of time, are examined, compared, and explained, sometimes from the circumstances under which they were delivered, sometimes from their reference to the general scheme of Christianity, but always without any attempt at straining their meaning, or any of those disingenuous arts common among the framers of systems. Occasionally, indeed, he appears to mistake the intention of Scripture : but, not being sure of our own interpretation, it would be presumption to decide he must every where be wrong where we think him so ; though we claim for ourselves the liberty he demanded, to examine his examination, and draw our own conclusions.

J. A. ST. J.

London, December, 1835.

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THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE little satisfaction and consistency that is to be found in most of the systems of divinity I have met with, made me betake myself to the sole reading of the Scripture (to which they all appeal) for the understanding the Christian religion. What from thence, by an attentive and unbiassed search I have received, reader, I here deliver to thee. If by this my labor thou receivest any light or confirmation in the truth, join with me in thanks to the Father of Lights, for his condescension to our understandings. If, upon a fair and unprejudiced examination, thou findest I have mistaken the sense and tenor of the gospel, I beseech thee, as a true Christian, in the spirit of the gospel (which is that of charity) and in the words of sobriety, set me right in the doctrine of salvation.

1. It is obvious to any one who reads the New Testament, that the doctrine of redemption, and consequently of the gospel, is founded upon the supposition of Adam's fall. To understand, therefore, what we are restored to by Jesus Christ, we must consider what the Scripture shows we lost by Adam. This I thought worthy of a diligent and unbiassed search; since I found the two extremes that men run into on this point, either on the one hand shook the foundations of all religion, or on the other made Christianity almost nothing. For whilst some men would have all Adam's posterity doomed to eternal infinite punishment, for the transgression of Adam, whom millions had never heard of, and no one had authorized to transact for him, or be his representative; this seemed to others so little consistent with the justice or goodness of the great and infinite God, that they thought there was no redemption necessary, and consequently that there was none, rather than admit of it upon a supposition so derogatory to the honor and attributes of that Infinite Being; and so made Jesus Christ nothing but the restorer and preacher of pure natural religion; thereby doing violence to the whole tenor of the New Testament: and, indeed, both sides will be suspected to have trespassed this way, against the written word of God, by any one who does but take it to be a collection of writings designed by God for the instruction of the illiterate bulk of mankind in the way to salvation; and therefore generally and in necessary points to be understood in the plain direct meaning of the words and phrases, such as they may be supposed to have had in the mouths of the speakers, who used them according to the language of that time and country wherein they lived, without such learned, artificial, and forced senses of them as are sought out, and put upon them in most of the systems of divinity, according to the notions that each one has been bred up in.

2. To one that thus unbiassed reads the Scriptures, what Adam fell from, is visible, was the state of perfect obedience, which is called *justice* in the New Testament, though the word which in the original signifies justice, be translated *righteousness*: and by this fall he lost paradise, wherein was tranquillity and the tree of life; that is, he lost bliss and immortality. The penalty annexed to the breach of the law, with the sentence pronounced by God upon it, shows this. The penalty stands thus: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." How was this executed? He did eat; but in the day he did eat, he did not actually die, but was turned out of paradise from the tree of life, and shut out for ever from it, lest he should take thereof and live for ever. This shows that the state of paradise was a state of immortality, of life without end, which he lost that very day that he eat.* His life began from thence

* The question here discussed is one upon which the varieties of opinion are almost as numerous as the persons who have treated of it. Milton, whose theoretical notions underwent, in the course of his life, numerous alterations, always tending from the more fanatical to the less, evidently, when he wrote the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, knew not what to think of the state into which Adam fell by his transgression; but, like the erring spirits,

"Reasoned high
Of fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

"The Jesuits," he says, "and that sect among us which is named of Arminius, are wont to accuse us," (he was now a Presbyterian,) "of making God the author of sin, in two degrees especially, not to speak of his permission: first, because we hold, that he hath decreed some to damnation, and consequently to sin, say they; next, because those means, which are of saving knowledge to others, he makes to them an occasion of greater sin. Yet, considering the perfection wherein man was created, and might have stood, no decree necessitating his free-will, but subsequent, though not in time, yet in order to causes which were in his own power; they might, methinks, be persuaded to absolve both God and us. Whenas the doctrine of Plato and Chrysippus, with their followers, the Academics and the Stoics, knew not what a consummate and most adorned Pandora was bestowed upon Adam to be the nurse and guide of his arbitrary happiness and perseverance; I mean his native innocence and perfection, which might have kept him from being our true Epimetheus; and though they taught of virtue and vice to be both the gift of divine destiny, they could yet give reasons not invalid, to justify the councils of God and fate from the insultery of mortal tongues: that man's own free-will, self-corrupted, is the adequate and sufficient cause of his disobedience besides fate; as

to shorten and waste, and to have an end; and from thence to his actual death, was but like the time of a prisoner between the sentence passed and the execution, which was in view and certain; death then entered and showed his face, which before was shut out and not known. So St. Paul, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;"* that is a state of death and mortality: and, "in Adam all die;"† that is, by reason of his transgression all men are mortal, and come to die.

3. This is so clear in these cited places, and so much the current of the New Testament, that nobody can deny, but that the doctrine of the gospel is, that death came on all men by Adam's sin; only they differ about the signification of the word death. For some will have it to be a state of guilt, wherein not only he but all his posterity was so involved, that every one descended of him deserved endless torment in hell-fire. I shall say nothing more here, how far, in the apprehensions of men, this consists with the justice and goodness of God, having mentioned it above: but it seems a strange way of understanding a law which requires the plainest and directest words, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery.—Could any one be supposed by a law that says, "for felony thou shalt die," not that he should lose his life, but be kept alive in perpetual exquisite torments? And would any one think himself fairly dealt with, that was so used?

4. To this they would have it be also a state of necessary sinning, and provoking God in every action that men do: a yet harder sense of the word death than the other. God says, "That in the day that thou eatest of the forbidden fruit, thou shalt die;" that is, thou and thy posterity shall be ever after incapable of doing any thing, but what shall be sinful and provoking to me, and shall justly deserve my wrath and indignation.—Could a worthy man be supposed to put such terms upon the obedience of his subjects? Much less can the righteous God be supposed, as a punishment of one sin wherewith he is displeased, to put a man under a necessity of sinning continually and so multiplying the provocation. The reason of this strange interpretation we shall perhaps find in some mistaken places of the New Testament. I must confess, by death here I can understand nothing but a ceasing to be, the losing of all actions of life and sense. Such a death came on Adam and all his posterity, by his first disobedience in paradise; under which death they should have lain for ever, had it not been for the redemption by Jesus Christ. If by death threatened to Adam were meant the corruption of hu-

man nature in his posterity it is strange that the New Testament should not any where take notice of it, and tell us, that corruption seized on all because of Adam's transgression, as well as it tells us so of death. But, as I remember, every one's sin is charged upon himself only.

5. Another part of the sentence was, 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return.' This shows that paradise was a place of bliss as well as immortality, without toil and without sorrow. But when man was turned out, he was exposed to the toil, anxiety, and frailties of this mortal life, which should end in the dust, out of which he was made, and to which he should return; and then have no more life or sense than the dust had, out of which he was made.

6. As Adam was turned out of paradise, so all his posterity was born out of it; out of the reach of the tree of life. All, like their father Adam, in a state of mortality, void of the tranquillity and bliss of paradise. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." But here will occur the common objection, that so many stumble at:—How doth it consist with the justice and goodness of God, that the posterity of Adam should suffer for his sin; the innocent be punished for the guilty? Very well, if keeping one from what he has no right to, be called a punishment. The state of immortality in paradise is not due to the posterity of Adam more than to any other creature. Nay, if God afford them a temporary mortal life, it is his gift, they owe it to his bounty, they could not claim it as their right, nor does he injure them when he takes it from them. Had he taken from mankind any thing that was their right; or did he put men in a state of misery worse than not being, without any fault or demerit of their own; this, indeed, would be hard to reconcile with the notion we have of justice, and much more with the goodness and other attributes of the Supreme Being, which he has declared of himself, and reason as well as revelation must acknowledge to be in him; unless we will confound good and evil, God and Satan. That such a state of extreme irremediable torment is worse than no being at all, if every one's sense did not determine against the vain philosophy, and foolish metaphysics of some men;* yet our Saviour's

*To what metaphysicians he alludes I am ignorant; but though, once born and conscious of existence, we all vehemently abhor to leave "the warm precincts of the cheerful day," and lie for ever in "cold obstruction" and Lethean sleep, we must doubtless humbly acquiesce in the truth and wisdom of our Saviour's decision. Our feelings, however, on the subject, depend greatly on our personal character. Moloch, a fierce and savage spirit, covets annihilation:—

"What doubt we to incense

His utmost ire? which to the height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce

To nothing this essential, happier far

Than miserable to have eternal being:

Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst

On this side nothing."

Homer also wanted not to express, both in his Iliad and Odyssey. And Manilius the poet, although in his fourth book he tells of some 'created both to sin and punishment;' yet without murmuring, and with an industrious cheerfulness, he acquits the Deity." Book i. ch. 3. And so Manilius might well do, because the pagan notions of deity and fate were most obscure and confused; for, to those best acquainted with ancient philosophy, it will, I doubt not, appear, that what they called fate, we call God, their revealed separate divinities being only the high ministers of this sovereign power of the universe.—Ed.

* Rom. v. 12.

† 1 Cor. xv. 22.

peremptory decision has put it past doubt, that one may be in such an estate, that it had been "better for him not to have been born." But that such a temporary life as we now have, with all its frailties and ordinary miseries, is better than no being, is evident by the high value we put upon it ourselves. And therefore though all die in Adam, yet none are truly punished but for their own deeds. God will render to every one—how? according to his deeds. "To those that obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil." "We must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad." And Christ himself, who knew for what he should condemn men at the last day, assures us, in the two places where he describes his proceeding at the great judgment, that the sentence of condemnation passes only on the workers of iniquity, such as neglected to fulfil the law in acts of charity.*—And again our Saviour tells the Jews, "that all shall come forth of their graves; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." But here is no condemnation of any one, for what his forefather Adam had done, which it is not likely should have been omitted, if that should have been a cause why any one was adjudged to the fire with the devil and his angels.—And he tells his disciples, that when he comes again with his angels in the glory of his Father, "that then he will render to every one according to his works."

7. Adam being thus turned out of paradise, and all his posterity born out of it, the consequence of it was, that all men should die, and remain under death for ever, and so be utterly lost.

8. From this estate of death Jesus Christ restores all mankind to life: "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." How this shall be, the same apostle tells us in the foregoing verse: "By man death came, by man also came the resurrection from the dead." Whereby it appears, that the life which Jesus Christ restores to all men, is that life which they receive again at

But Belial, finding, even in the midst of torment, some solace from meditation and conjectures at the endless future, entertains other opinions:

"We must exasperate

Th' Almighty victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure
*To be no more:—sad cure! For who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity!*
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion?"

Byron, in one of his gloomy moods, agrees with Moloch:

"Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be."—Euthanasia.

[Ed.

the resurrection. Then they recovered from death, which otherwise all mankind should have continued under, lost for ever, as appears by St. Paul's arguing concerning the resurrection.

9. And thus men are by the second Adam restored to life again; that so by Adam's sin they may none of them lose any thing, which by their own righteousness they might have a title to. For righteousness, or an exact obedience to the law, seems by the Scripture to have a claim of right to eternal life: "To him that worketh," i. e. does the works of the law, "is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt:†" and, "blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.‡" If any of the posterity of Adam were just, they shall not lose the reward of it,—eternal life and bliss,—by being his mortal issue: Christ will bring them all to life again; and then they shall be put every one upon his own trial, and receive judgment, as he is found to be righteous or not: and the righteous, as our Saviour says,— "shall go into eternal life." Nor shall any one miss it, who has done what our Saviour directed the lawyer, who asked, "What he should do to inherit eternal life?" "Do this," that is, what is required by the law, "and thou shalt live."

10. On the other side, it seems the unalterable purpose of the divine justice, that no unrighteous person, no one that is guilty of any breach of the law, should be in paradise; but that the wages of sin should be to every man, as it was to Adam, an exclusion of him out of that happy state of immortality, and bring death upon him. And this is so conformable to the eternal and established law of right and wrong, that it is spoken of too as if it could not be otherwise. St. James says, "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," as it were by a natural and necessary production.

11. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin," says St. Paul; and, "the wages of sin is death." Death is the purchase of any, of every sin. "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."‡ And of this St. James gives a reason: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all: for he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also,— Do not kill:" that is, he that offends in any one point, sins against the authority which established the law.

12. Here then we have the standing and fixed measures of life and death. Immortality and bliss belong to the righteous; those who have lived in an exact conformity to the law of God, are out of the reach of death: but an exclusion from paradise, and loss of immortality, is the portion of sinners; of all those who have any way broke that law, and failed of a complete obedience to it by the guilt of any one transgression. And thus mankind, by the law, are put upon the issues of life or death; as they are righteous or unrighteous, just or unjust; that is, exact performers, or transgressors of the law. ✓

13. But yet "all having sinned, and come short

* Rom. iv. 4.

† Rev. xxii. 14.

‡ Gal. iii. 10.

* Matt. vii. 23; Luke xiii. 27; Matt. xxv. 42.

of the glory of God," that is, the kingdom of God in heaven, which is often called his glory, both Jews and Gentiles, so that "by the deeds of the law no one could be justified," it follows, that no one could then have eternal life and bliss.

14. Perhaps it will be demanded,—Why did God give so hard a law to mankind, that to the apostles' time no one of Adam's issue had kept it? * *Answer.* It was such a law as the purity of God's nature required, and must be the law of such a creature as man, unless God would have made him a rational creature, and not required him to have lived by the law of reason, but would have countenanced in him irregularity and disobedience to that light which he had, and that rule which was suitable to his nature; which would have been to have authorized disorder, confusion, and wickedness in his creatures. For that this law was the law of reason, or, as it is called, of nature, we shall see by-and-by: and if rational creatures will not live up to the rule of their reason, who shall excuse them? If you will admit them to forsake reason in one point, why not in another? Where will you stop? To disobey God in any part of his commands (and it is he that commands what reason does) is direct rebellion; which if dispensed with in any point, government and order are at an end, and there can be no bounds set to the lawless exorbitancy of unconfin'd men. "The law therefore was," as St. Paul tells us,—“holy, just, and good,”† and such as it ought, and could not otherwise be.

15. This then being the case, that whoever is guilty of any sin, should certainly die, and cease to be, the benefit of life restored by Christ at the resurrection would have been no great advantage, (forasmuch as here again death must have seized upon all mankind, because all had sinned; for the wages of sin is every where death, as well after, as before the resurrection,) if God had not found out a way to justify some; i. e. so many as obeyed another law, which God gave, which in the New Testament is called "the law of faith," and is opposed to "the law of works."‡ And therefore the punishment of those who would not follow him was to lose their souls, i. e. their lives;|| as is plain, considering the occasion it was spoken on.

16. The better to understand "the law of faith," it will be convenient in the first place to consider "the law of works." "The law of works," then, in short, is that law which requires perfect obedience, without any remission or abatement; so that by that law a man cannot be just, or justified, without an exact performance of every tittle.—Such a perfect obedience in the New Testament is termed *δικαιοσύνη*, which we translate righteousness.

17. The language of this law is, Do this and live, transgress and die. "Ye shall keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them."§ "I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments; which if a man do, he shall even live in them."¶ "Moses," says St. Paul, "describeth the righteousness which is

of the law, that the man which doth those things shall live in them."* "The law is not of faith; but that man that doth them shall live in them."† On the other side, transgress and die; no dispensation, no atonement. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

18. Where this law of works was to be found, the New Testament tells us, viz. in the law delivered by Moses. "The law was given by Moses, but faith and truth came by Jesus Christ." "Did not Moses give you the law?" says our Saviour, "and yet none of you keep the law." And this is the law which he speaks of, where he asks the lawyer, "What is written in the law? How readest thou? This do, and thou shalt live."—This is that which St. Paul so often styles the "law," without any other distinction: "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law are justified." It is needless to quote any more places; his epistles are all full of it, especially this to the Romans.

19. But the law given by Moses being not given to all mankind, how are all men sinners, since without a law there is no transgression? To this the apostle answers, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do (i. e. find it reasonable to do) by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and amongst one another their thoughts accusing or excusing." By which, and other places in the following chapter, it is plain, that under the law of works is comprehended also the law of nature, knowable by reason, as well as the law given by Moses. "For," says St. Paul, "we have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:" which they could not do without a law.

20. Nay, whatever God requires any where to be done, without making any allowance for faith, that is a part of the law of works. So the forbidding Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge, was part of the law of works. Only we must take notice here, that some of God's positive commands being for peculiar ends, and suited to particular circumstances of times, places, and persons, having a limited and only temporary obligation, by virtue of God's positive injunction; such as was that part of Moses's law which concerned the outward worship or political constitution of the Jews, and is called the ceremonial and Judaical law, in contradistinction to the moral part of it; which being conformable to the eternal law of right, is of eternal obligation, and therefore remains in force still under the gospel; nor is abrogated by the "law of faith," as St. Paul found some ready to infer: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

21. Nor can it be otherwise; for were there no "law of works," there could be no "law of faith." For there could be no need of faith, which should be counted to men for righteousness, if there were no law to be the rule and measure of righteousness, which men failed in their obedience to.—

* As appears by Rom. iii. and Gal. iii.

† Rom. vii. 21.

‡ Ib. iii. 27.

§ Mark viii. 35, 38.

¶ Lev. xviii. 5.

¶ Ezek. xx. 11.

* Rom. x. 5.

† Gal. iii. 12.

Where there is no law, there is no sin; all are righteous equally with or without faith.

22. The rule therefore of right is the same that ever it was; the obligation to observe it is also the same: the difference between the law of works and the law of faith is only this—that the law of works makes no allowance for failing on any occasion. Those that obey are righteous; those that in any part disobey are unrighteous, and must not expect life, the reward of righteousness. But by the law of faith, faith is allowed to supply the defect of full obedience; and so the believers are admitted to life and immortality, as if they were righteous. Only here we must take notice, that when St. Paul says, that the gospel establishes the law, he means the moral part of the law of Moses: for that he could not mean the ceremonial or political part of it, is evident by what I quoted out of him just now, where he says, "The Gentiles that do by nature the things contained in the law, their consciences bearing witness." For the Gentiles neither did nor thought of the Judaical or ceremonial institutions of Moses; it was only the moral part their consciences were concerned in. As for the rest, St. Paul tells the Gallatians, chap. iv., they are not under that part of the law, which, verse 3, he calls "elements of the world;" and verse 9, "weak and beggarly elements." And our Saviour himself, in his gospel-sermon on the mount, tells them, that whatever they might think, he was not come to dissolve the law, but to make it more full and strict; for that that is meant by *πληρῶσαι*, is evident from the following part of that chapter, where he gives the precepts in a stricter sense than they were received in before. But they are all precepts of the moral law which he reinforces: what should become of the ritual law he tells the woman of Samaria in these words: "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

23. Thus then as to the law, in short: the civil and ritual part of the law delivered by Moses obliges not Christians, though to the Jews it were a part of the law of works; it being a part of the law of nature, that man ought to obey every positive law of God, whenever he shall please to make any such addition to the law of his nature. But the moral part of Moses's law, or the moral law, (which is every where the same, the eternal rule of right,) obliges Christians and all men every where, and is to all men the standing law of works. But Christian believers have the privilege to be under the "law of faith" too; which is that law whereby God justifies a man for believing, though by his works he be not just or righteous; i. e. though he came short of perfect obedience to the law of works. God alone does, or can justify or make just those who by their works are not so; which he doth by counting their faith for righteousness; i. e. for a complete performance of the law. Abraham "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." To him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works;" i. e.

without a full measure of works, which is exact obedience. Saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

24. This faith for which God justified Abraham, what was it? It was the believing God when he engaged his promise in the covenant he made with him. This will be plain to any one who considers these places together, Gen. xv. 6: "He believed in the Lord," or "believed the Lord;" for that the Hebrew phrase "believing in," signifies no more but "believing," is plain from St. Paul's citation of this place, Rom. iv. 3, where he repeats it thus: "Abraham believed God," which he thus explains, "Who against hope, believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations: according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God: and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was also able to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." By which it is clear, that the faith which God counted to Abraham for righteousness, was nothing but a firm belief of what God declared to him, and a steadfast relying on him for the accomplishment of what he had promised.

25. "Now this," says St. Paul, "was not writ for his (Abraham's) sake alone, but for us also;" teaching us, that as Abraham was justified for his faith, so also ours shall be accounted to us for righteousness, if we believe God as Abraham believed him. Whereby it is plain is meant the firmness of our faith, without staggering; and not the believing the same propositions that Abraham believed; viz. that though he and Sarah were old, and past the time and hopes of children, yet he should have a son by her, and by him become the father of a great people, which should possess the land of Canaan. This was what Abraham believed, and was counted to him for righteousness: but nobody, I think, will say, that any one's believing this now, shall be imputed to him for righteousness. The law of faith then, in short, is for every one to believe what God requires him to believe, as a condition of the covenant he makes with him, and not to doubt of the performance of his promises. This the apostle intimates in the close here: "but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." We must therefore examine and see what God requires us to believe now, under the revelation of the gospel; for the belief of one invisible, eternal, omnipotent God, maker of heaven and earth, &c. was required before, as well as now.

26. What we are now required to believe to obtain eternal life, is plainly set down in the gospel. St. John tells us, John iii. 36, "He that believeth on the Son, hath eternal life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life." What this believing on him is, we are also told in the next chapter. "The woman saith unto him, I know that the Messiah cometh: when he is come, he will tell us

all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. The woman then went into the city, and saith to the men, come, see a man that hath told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Messiah? And many of the Samaritans believed on him, for the saying of the woman; who testified, he told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, many more believed because of his words; and said to the woman, We believe not any longer because of thy saying, for we have heard ourselves, and we know that this man is truly the Saviour of the world, the Messiah."

27. By which place it is plain, that believing on the Son, is the believing that Jesus was the Messiah; giving credit to the miracles he did, and the profession he made of himself: for those who were said to believe on him for the saying of the woman, tell the woman that they now believed not any longer because of her saying; but that having heard him themselves, they knew, i. e. believed past doubt, that he was the Messiah.

28. This was the great proposition that was then controverted concerning Jesus of Nazareth, whether he was the Messiah or no; and the assent to that, was that which distinguished believers from unbelievers. When many of the disciples had forsaken him, upon his declaring that he was the bread of life which came down from heaven, he said to the apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered him; "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe, and are sure thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God." This was the faith which distinguished them from apostates and unbelievers, and was sufficient to continue them in the rank of apostles: and it was upon the same proposition, "That Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the living God," owned by St. Peter, that our Saviour said he would build his church.*

* Though I shall, in the Appendix, have occasion to refer more than once to the conformity of opinion between Locke and that great and excellent prelate, Jeremy Taylor, the reader may not, perhaps, be displeased to find his testimony introduced here at the outset. Nothing can be more explicit, or more to the purpose, than the following: "Now the great object which I speak of is Jesus Christ crucified. 'I have determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,' so said St. Paul to the church of Corinth. This is the article upon the confession of which Christ built his church; viz. only upon St. Peter's creed, which was no more but this simple enunciation, 'We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;' and to this salvation particularly is promised, as in the case of Martha's creed. (John xi. 27.) 'To this the Scripture gives the greatest testimony, and to all them that confess it; for every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God;' and, 'whosoever confesseth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God:' the believing this article is the end of writing the four gospels: 'These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;' and then that this sufficient follows: 'and that believing,' viz. this article (for this was only instanced in,) 'ye might have life through his name.' This is that great article, which, as to the nature of the things to be believed, is sufficient disposition to prepare a catechumen to baptism; as

29. To convince men of this, he did his miracles; and their assent to, or not assenting to this, made them to be, or not to be of his church; believers, or not believers. "The Jews came round about him, and said unto him, how long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Messiah, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Conformable hereunto St. John tells us, "That many deceivers are entered into the world, who confessed not that Jesus, the Messiah, is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist: whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of the Messiah has not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of the Messiah," i. e. that Jesus is he, "hath both the Father and the Son." That this is the meaning of the place, is plain from what he says in his foregoing epistle: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Messiah, is born of God." And therefore, drawing to a close of his gospel, and showing the end for which he wrote it, he has these words: "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Whereby it is plain, that the gospel was written to induce men into a belief of this proposition—that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah; which, if they believed they should have life.

30. Accordingly the great question amongst the Jews was, whether he were the Messiah or no: and the great point insisted on and promulgated in the gospel was, that he was the Messiah. The first glad tidings of his birth, brought to the shepherds by an angel, was in these words: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for to you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Our Saviour discoursing with Martha about the means of attaining eternal life, saith to her, "Whosoever believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, which should come into the world." This answer of hers sheweth what it is to believe in Jesus Christ, so as to have eternal life; viz. to believe that he is the Messiah, the Son of God, whose coming was foretold by the prophets. And thus Andrew and Philip express it: Andrew says to his brother Simon, "We have found the Messiah; which is, being interpreted,

appears in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, whose creed was only this: 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;' and upon this confession (saith the story) they both went into the water, and the Ethiop was washed, and became as white as snow."—Liberty of Prophecy, § 1. p. 8, 9. But with this learned and eloquent work the readers of the "Sacred Classics" are already familiar; and must therefore know that it contains the entire foundation of Locke's Treatise. See particularly the sections on Faith and Heresy, which no man can read without benefit; since, were the spirit in which they are written the predominant spirit in the Christian world, great distinct bodies of heretics would scarcely be found.

the Christ." Philip saith to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write; Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." John i. 41, 45. According to what the evangelist says in this place, I have, for the clearer understanding of the Scripture, all along put Messiah for Christ; Christ being but the Greek name for the Hebrew Messiah, and both signifying The Anointed.

31. And that he was the Messiah, was the great truth he took pains to convince his disciples and apostles of; appearing to them after his resurrection: as may be seen, Luke xxiv., which we shall more particularly consider in another place. There we read what gospel our Saviour preached to his disciples and apostles; and that, as soon as he was risen from the dead, twice the very day of his resurrection.

32. And if we may gather what was to be believed by all nations, from what was preached unto them, we may certainly know what they were commanded (Matt. ult.) to teach all nations, by what they actually did teach all nations; we may observe, that the preaching of the apostles every where in the Acts tended to this one point, to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Indeed, now, after his death, his resurrection was also commonly required to be believed as a necessary article, and sometimes solely insisted on; it being a mark and undoubted evidence of his being the Messiah, and necessary now to be believed by those who would receive him as the Messiah. For since the Messiah was to be a Saviour and a King, and to give life and a kingdom to those who received him, as we shall see by-and-by, there could have been no pretence to have given him out for the Messiah, and to require men to believe him to be so, who thought him under the power of death, and corruption of the grave. And therefore those who believed him to be the Messiah, must believe that he was risen from the dead; and those who believed him to be risen from the dead, could not doubt of his being the Messiah. But of this more in another place.

33. Let us see therefore how the apostles preached Christ, and what they proposed to their hearers to believe. St. Peter at Jerusalem, Acts ii., by his first sermon, converted three thousand souls. What was his word, which, as we are told, "they gladly received, and thereupon were baptized?" That may be seen from verse 22 to verse 36. In short this, which is the conclusion drawn from all that he had said, and which he presses on them as the thing they were to believe, viz. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, Lord and Messiah."

34. To the same purpose was his discourse to the Jews in the temple, Acts iii., the design whereof you have, verse 18: "But those things that God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that the Messiah should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." In the next chapter, Acts iv., Peter and John being examined about the miracle on the lame man, profess it to have been done in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, who was the Messiah, in whom alone there was salvation. The same thing they confirm to them again, Acts v. "And

daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus the Messiah."

35. What was Stephen's speech to the council, Acts vii., but a reprehension to them, that they were the betrayers and murderers of the just one? which is the title by which he plainly designs the Messiah, whose coming was foreshown by the prophets. And that the Messiah was to be without sin (which is the import of the word Just) was the opinion of the Jews, appears from John iv. 22, compared with 24.

36. Acts viii. Philip carries the gospel to Samaria. "Then Philip went down to Samaria, and preached to them." What was it he preached? You have an account of it in this one word, "The Messiah," verse 5. This being that alone which was required of them, to believe that Jesus was the Messiah; which, when they believed, they were baptized. And when they believed Philip's "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus the Messiah, they were baptized, both men and women."

37. Philip being sent from thence, by a special call of the Spirit, to make an eminent convert, out of Isaiah preaches to him Jesus; and what it was he preached concerning Jesus, we may know by the profession of faith the eunuch made, upon which he was admitted to baptism: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" which is as much as to say, I believe that he, whom you call Jesus Christ, is really and truly the Messiah that was promised. For that believing him to be the Son of God and to be the Messiah was the same thing, may appear by comparing John i. 45, with verse 49, where Nathaniel owns Jesus to be the Messiah in these terms: "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel." So the Jews, Luke xxii. 70, asking Christ, whether he were the Son of God; plainly demanded of him, whether he were the Messiah? Which is evident by comparing that with the three preceding verses. They ask him, verse 67, whether he were the Messiah? He answers: "If I tell you, you will not believe;" but withal tells them, that from henceforth he should be in possession of the kingdom of the Messiah, expressed in these words: "Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God;" which made them all cry out, "Art thou then the Son of God?" i. e. dost thou then own thyself to be the Messiah? To which he replies: "Ye say that I am." That the Son of God was the known title of the Messiah at that time amongst the Jews, we may see also from what the Jews say to Pilate: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God;" i. e. by making himself the Messiah, the prophet which was to come, but falsely; and therefore he deserves to die by the law. That this was the common signification of the Son of God, is further evident from what the chief priests, mocking him, said, when he was on the cross: "He saved others, himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now; if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God;" i. e. he said, he was the Messiah: but it is plainly false; for if he were, God would deliver him; for the Messiah is to be king of Israel, the Saviour of others; but this man

cannot save himself. The chief priests mention here the two titles then in use whereby the Jews commonly designed the Messiah, viz. "Son of God, and king of Israel." That of Son of God, was so familiar a compellation of the Messiah, who was then so much expected and talked of, that the Romans it seems, who lived amongst them, had learned it; as appears from Matt. xxvii. "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, truly this was the Son of God;" this was that extraordinary person that was looked for.

38. Acts ix. St. Paul exercising the commission to preach the gospel, which he had received in a miraculous way, "straightway preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of God;" i. e. that Jesus was the Messiah: for Christ in this place is evidently a proper name. And that this was it which Paul preached, appears from verse 22: "Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ;" i. e. the Messiah.

39. Peter, when he came to Cornelius at Cæsarea; who by a vision was ordered to send for him, as Peter, on the other side, was by a vision commanded to go to him; what does he teach him? His whole discourse, Acts x., tends to show what he says God commanded the apostles "to preach unto the people, and to testify: that it is he (Jesus) which was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead." And that it was "to him that all the prophets give witness, that through his name whosoever believed in him shall have remission of sins." This is the word which God sent to the children of Israel; that word which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached. And these are the words which had been promised to Cornelius, "Whereby he and all his house should be saved:" which words amount only to thus much, that Jesus was the Messiah, the Saviour that was promised. Upon their receiving of this (for this was all was taught them) the Holy Ghost fell on them, and they were baptized. It is observable here, that the Holy Ghost fell on them before they were baptized; which in other places converts received not till after baptism. The reason whereof seems to be this; that God, by bestowing on them the Holy Ghost, did thus declare from heaven, that the Gentiles, upon believing Jesus to be the Messiah, ought to be admitted into the church by baptism as well as the Jews. Whoever reads St. Peter's defence, when he was accused by those of the circumcision, that he had not kept that distance which he ought with the uncircumcised, will be of this opinion; and see by what he says,† that this was the ground, and an irresistible authority to him for doing so strange a thing, as it appeared to the Jews, (who alone yet were members of the Christian church,) to admit Gentiles into their communion, upon their believing. And therefore St. Peter, in the foregoing chapter, Acts x., before he would baptize them, proposes this question to those of the circumcision, which came with him,

and were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gifts of the Holy Ghost: "Can any one forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" And when some of the sect of the Pharisees, who believed, thought it needful that the converted Gentiles should be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, Peter "rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God made choice amongst us, that the Gentiles," viz. Cornelius, and those here converted with him, "by my mouth should hear the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." So that both Jews and Gentiles, who believed Jesus to be the Messiah, received thereupon the seal of baptism; whereby they are owned to be his, and distinguished from unbelievers. From what is above said, we may observe, that this preaching Jesus to be the Messiah, is called the Word, and the Word of God; and believing it, receiving the Word of God.* And the Word of the gospel.† And so likewise in the history of the gospel, what Mark iv. 14, 15, calls simply the Word, St. Luke calls the Word of God, Luke, viii. 11. And St. Matthew, xiii. 19, the Word of the Kingdom; which were, it seems, in the gospel writers synonymous terms, and are so to be understood by us.

40. But to go on: Acts xiii. Paul preaches in the synagogue at Antioch, where he makes it his business to convince the Jews, that "God, according to his promise, had of the seed of David raised to Israel a Saviour, Jesus." That he was he of whom the prophets wrote, i. e. the Messiah: and that as a demonstration of his being so, God had raised him from the dead. From whence he argues thus: "We evangelize to you," or bring you this gospel, "how that the promise which was made to our fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, in that he hath raised up Jesus again;" as it is also written in the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." And having gone on to prove him to be the Messiah, by his resurrection from the dead, he makes this conclusion: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him all who believe, are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." This is in this chapter called "the word of God" over and over again. Compare verse 42 with 44, 46, 48, 49; and chapter xii. verse 24.

41. At "Thessalonica, Paul, as his manner was, went into the synagogue, and three Sabbath-days reasoned with the Jews out of the Scriptures; opening and alleging, that the Messiah must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the Messiah. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas: but the Jews which believed not, set the city in an uproar."‡ Can there be any thing plainer, than that the assenting to this proposition, that Jesus was the

* Acts xi. 14.

† Ibid. xi.

* Vide Acts x. 36, 37; xi. 1, 19, 20.

† Acts xv. 7.

‡ Acts xvii.

Messiah, was that which distinguished the believers from the unbelievers? For this was that alone which, three Sabbaths, Paul endeavored to convince them of, as the text tells us in direct words. From thence he went to Berea, and preached the same thing; and the Bereans are commended for searching the Scriptures, whether those things, i. e. which he had said, concerning Jesus's being the Messiah, were true or no.

42. The same doctrine we find him preaching at Corinth: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks."* "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Greeks."

43. Upon the like occasion he tells the Jews at Antioch, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it off from you, we turn to the Gentiles."† It is plain here, St. Paul's charging their blood on their own heads, is for opposing this single truth—that Jesus was the Messiah; that salvation or perdition depends upon believing or rejecting this one proposition. I mean, this is all is required to be believed by those who acknowledge but one eternal and invisible God, the Maker of heaven and earth, as the Jews did. For that there is something more required to salvation, besides believing, we shall see hereafter. In the meantime, it is fit here on this occasion to take notice, that though the apostles, in their preaching to the Jews, and the devout, (as we translate the word *σεβεινους*, who were proselytes of the gate, and the worshippers of one eternal invisible God,) said nothing of the believing in this one true God, the Maker of heaven and earth; because it was needless to press this to those who believed and professed it already: (for to such, it is plain, were most of their discourses hitherto;) yet when they had to do with idolatrous heathens, who were not yet come to the knowledge of the one only true God; they began with that, as necessary to be believed; it being the foundation on which the other was built, and without which it could signify nothing.

44. Thus Paul, speaking to the idolatrous Lystrians, who would have sacrificed to him and Barnabas, says:—"We preach unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.—Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

45. Thus also he proceeded with the idolatrous Athenians, Acts xvii., telling them, upon occasion of the altar dedicated to the unknown God,— "Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto

you; God, who made the world, and all things therein: seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art, and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent; because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." So that we see, where any thing more was necessary to be proposed to be believed, as there was to the heathen idolators, there the apostles were careful not to omit it.*

46. Paul at Corinth, reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath-day, and testified to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah.† "And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God amongst them;" that is, the good news, that Jesus was the Messiah; as we have already shown is meant by the word of God. Apollos, another preacher of the gospel, when he was instructed in the way of God more perfectly, what did he teach but this same doctrine? As we may see in this account of him, "that when he was come into Achaia, he helped the brethren much who had believed through grace; for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly; showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah."

47. St. Paul, in the account he gives of himself before Festus and Agrippa, professes this alone to be the doctrine he taught after his conversion:—for, says he, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that the Messiah should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." Which was no more than to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. This is that, which, as we have above observed, is called the "word of God," Acts xi. 1, compared with the foregoing chapter, from verse 34 to the end; and xiii. 42,

* How an author who writes in this reverential and pious strain, could ever have been accused of Atheism, it is extremely difficult to conceive. Yet the Rev. John Edwards, the unworthy antagonist of Locke, accuses him of Socinianism, in which he finds "a tang of atheism." (Thoughts concerning the Causes of Atheism, &c. p. 61.) Not to think as he thought on the doctrine of the Trinity seems, in his eyes, to have been akin to the worst impiety;—though from that Letter of Constantine to Alexander and Arius, of which Hosius, bishop of Corduba was the bearer, and probably the author, the whole dispute appears to have been considered by the primitive church as "a certain vain piece of a question, ill begun and more unadvisedly published; a question which no law or ecclesiastical canon defineth; a fruitless contention, the product of idle brains; a matter so nice, so obscure, so intricate, that it was neither to be explicated by the clergy, nor understood by the people."—Liberty of Prophesying.—Ed.

* Acts xviii. 4, 6.

† Ibid. xiii. 46.

† Acts xviii.

compared with 44, 46, 48, 49; and xvii. 13, compared with verse 11, 3. It is also called "the word of the gospel," Acts xv. 7. And this is that "word of God," and that gospel, which, wherever their discourses are set down, we find the apostles preached; and was that faith which made both Jews and Gentiles believers and members of the church of Christ; purifying their hearts,* and carrying with it remission of sins.† So that all that was to be believed for justification, was no more but this single proposition—that "Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ," or the Messiah. All, I say, that was to be *believed* for justification: for that it was not all that was required to be *done* for justification, we shall see hereafter.

48. Though we have seen above from what our Saviour has pronounced himself, "that he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" and are taught from John iv. 39, compared with verse 42, "that believing on him, is believing that he is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world;" and the confession made by St. Peter, Matt. xvi. 16,— "that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God," being the rock on which our Saviour has promised to build his church; though this, I say, and what else we have already taken notice of, be enough to convince us what it is we are in the gospel required to believe to eternal life, without adding what we have observed from the preaching of the apostles; yet it may not be amiss, for the further clearing this matter, to observe what the evangelists deliver concerning the same thing, though in different words; which therefore, perhaps, are not so generally taken notice of to this purpose.

49. We have above observed, from the words of Andrew and Philip compared, that the Messiah and him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, signify the same thing. We shall now consider that place, John i., a little further. Andrew says to Simon, "We have found the Messiah." Philip, on the same occasion, says to Nathanael, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael, who disbelieved this, when upon Christ's speaking to him he was convinced of it, declares his assent to it in these words: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel;" from which it is evident, that to believe him to be him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, or to be the "Son of God," or to be the "King of Israel," was in effect the same as to believe him to be the Messiah: and an assent to that was what our Saviour received for believing: for upon Nathanael's making a confession in these words, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel; Jesus answered and said to him, because I said to thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, dost thou believe? Thou shalt see greater things than these." I desire any one to read the latter part of the first of John, from verse 25, with attention; and tell me, whether it be not plain, that this phrase, "the Son of God," is an expression used for the Messiah. To which let him add Martha's declaration

of her faith, in these words: "I believe that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, who should come into the world;" and that passage of St. John,— "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Messiah the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name;" and then tell me, whether he can doubt that Messiah and Son of God were synonymous terms at that time amongst the Jews.

50. The prophecy of Daniel where he is called "Messiah the Prince;"* and the mention of his government and kingdom, and the deliverance by him in Isaiah, Daniel, and other prophecies understood of the Messiah, were so well known to the Jews, and had so raised their hopes of him about this time, which, by their account, was to be the time of his coming to restore the kingdom to Israel; that Herod no sooner heard of the magi's inquiry after him that was born king of the Jews: but he forthwith demanded of the chief priests and Scribes, where the Messiah should be born; not doubting, but if there were any king born to the Jews, it was the Messiah, whose coming was now the general expectation, as appears Luke iii. 15:—"The people being in expectation, and all men musing in their hearts of John, whether he were the Messiah or not." And when the priests and Levites sent to ask him who he was, he, understanding their meaning, answers, John i. 20, that he was not the Messiah; but he bears witness that Jesus is the Son of God; i. e. the Messiah.

51. This looking for the Messiah at this time we see also in Simeon, who is said to be waiting for the consolation of Israel: and having the child Jesus in his arms, he says he had "seen the salvation of the Lord." And "Anna coming at the same instant into the temple, she gave thanks also unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Israel." And of Joseph of Arimathea it is said, that "he also expected the kingdom of God;" by all which was meant the coming of the Messiah. And Luke xix. it is said, "They thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."

52. This being premised, let us see what it was that John the Baptist preached, when he first entered upon his ministry. That St. Matthew tells us, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This was a declaration of the coming of the Messiah; the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God being the same, as is clear out of several places of the evangelists; and both signifying the kingdom of the Messiah. The profession which John the Baptist made, when sent to the Jews, John i. 19, was, "that he was not the Messiah, but that Jesus was." This will appear to any one who will compare verse 26, 34, with John iii. 27, 30. The Jews being very inquisitive to know whether John were the Messiah, he positively denies it, but tells them, he was only his forerunner; and that there stood one amongst them, who would follow him, whose shoe-latchet he was not worthy to untie.— The next day, seeing Jesus, he says, he was the man; and that his own baptizing in water was

* Acts xv. 9.

† Acts x. 43.

* Chapter ix.

only that Jesus might be manifested to the world; and that he knew him not, till he saw the Holy Ghost descend upon him. He that sent him to baptize having told him, that he on whom he should see the Spirit descend, and rest upon, he it was that should baptize with the Holy Ghost; and that therefore he witnessed, that "this was the Son of God, the Messiah:" and chap. iii., they came to John the Baptist, and tell him, that Jesus baptized and that all men went to him. John answers, he has his authority from heaven: you know I never said, I was the Messiah, but that I was sent before him: he must increase, but I must decrease; for God hath sent him, and he speaks the words of God, and God hath given all things into the hands of his Son; "and he that believes on the Son hath eternal life." The same doctrine, and nothing else, but what was preached by the apostles afterwards; as we have seen all through the Acts, *v. g.* that Jesus was the Messiah. And that it was that John bears witness of our Saviour, as Jesus himself says, John v. 33.

53. This also was the declaration that was given of him at his baptism, by a voice from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" which was a declaration of him to be the Messiah; the Son of God being (as we have showed) understood to signify the Messiah. To which we may add the first mention of him after his conception, in the words of the angel to Joseph: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," or Saviour; "for he shall save his people from their sins." It was a received doctrine in the Jewish nation, that at the coming of the Messiah all their sins should be forgiven them. These words therefore of the angel we may look on as a declaration that Jesus was the Messiah; whereof these words, "his people," are a further mark; which suppose him to have a people, and consequently to be a king.

54. After his baptism, Jesus himself enters upon his ministry. But before we examine what it was he proposed to be believed, we must observe, that there is a threefold declaration of the Messiah: 1. By miracles. The spirit of prophecy had now for many ages forsaken the Jews; and though their commonwealth were not quite dissolved but that they lived under their own laws, yet they were under a foreign dominion, subject to the Romans. In this state, their account of the time being up, they were in expectation of the Messiah, and of deliverance by him in a kingdom he was to set up, according to their ancient prophecies of him; which gave them hopes of an extraordinary man yet to come to God, who with an extraordinary and divine power and miracles, should evidence his mission, and work their deliverance. And of any such extraordinary person, who should have the power of doing miracles, they had no other expectation but only of their Messiah. One great prophet and worker of miracles, and only one more, they expected, who was to be the Messiah. And therefore we see the people justified their "believing in him," that is, their believing him to be the Messiah, because of the miracles he did; "and many of the people believed in him, and said, When the Messiah cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?" And when the Jews, at the feast of dedication, coming about him,

said unto him, How long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Messiah, tell us plainly; Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, bear witness of me. And John v. 36, he says, "I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to do, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." Where, by the way, we may observe, that his being "sent by the Father," is but another way of expressing the Messiah; which is evident from this place here, John v., compared with that of John x., last quoted: for there he says, that his works bear witness of him; and what was that witness? viz. that he was the Messiah. Here again he says, that his works bear witness of him; and what is that witness? viz. "that the Father sent him." By which we are taught, that to be sent by the Father, and to be the Messiah, was the same thing in his way of declaring himself. And accordingly we find many hearkened and assented to his testimony, and believed on him, seeing the things that he did.*

55. 2. Another way of declaring the coming of the Messiah, was by phrases and circumlocutions, that did signify or intimate his coming, though not in direct words pointing out the person. The most usual of these were, "The kingdom of God, and of heaven:"† because it was that

* John iv. 53, and xi. 45; and elsewhere.

† From the extreme acuteness and subtilty of his mind, Locke, who here seems to be perfectly right in his views, sometimes introduces too much nicety, perhaps, into his interpretations of Scripture, though the method he followed and the pains he took to arrive at truth deserve the admiration of every Christian. In his Notes on the epistle to the Galatians i. 4, — *ὅπως ἐξέλθῃς ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ ἐνεστώτος αἰῶνος πονηροῦ* — "that he might take us out of this present evil world, or age;" so the Greek words signify. Whereby, he says, it cannot be thought that St. Paul meant that Christians were to be immediately removed into the other world. Therefore *ἐνεστώτος αἰῶνος* must signify something else than present world, in the ordinary import of these words in English. *αἰὼν οὗτος*, 1 Cor. ii. 6, 8, and in other places, plainly signifies the Jewish nation, under the Mosaic constitution; and it suits very well with the apostle's design in this epistle, that it should do so here. God has in this world but one kingdom and one people. The nation of the Jews were the kingdom and people of God whilst the law stood. And this kingdom of God under the Mosaic constitution was called *αἰὼν οὗτος*, "this age," or, as it is commonly translated, "this world," to which *αἰὼν ἐνεστώτος*, "the present world, or age," here answers. But the kingdom of God, which was to be under the Messiah, wherein the economy and constitution of the Jewish church, and the nation itself, that, in opposition to Christ, adhered to it, was to be laid aside, is in the New Testament called *αἰὼν μέλλων*, — "the world, or age, to come;" so that Christ's taking them out of the present world, may, without any violence to the words, be understood to signify his setting them free from the Mosaic constitution. This is suitable to the design of this epistle, and what St. Paul has declared in many other places. See Col. ii. 14–17, and 20, which agrees with this place, and Rom. vii. 4, 6. The law is said to be "contrary to us," Col. ii. 14, and to "work wrath," Rom. iv. 15, and St. Paul speaks very diminishingly of the ritual parts of it in many places. But yet, if all this may

which was oftenest spoken of the Messiah, in the Old Testament, in very plain words ; and a kingdom was that which the Jews most looked after and wished for. In that known place, Isaiah ix. : "The government shall be upon his shoulders ; he shall be called the Prince of peace : of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end : upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with justice, from henceforth, even for ever." Micah v. 2. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judea, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the ruler in Israel." And Daniel, besides that he calls him "Messiah the prince,"* in the account of his vision "of the Son of man," says, "There was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away ; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."† So that the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven, were common phrases amongst the Jews, to signify the times of the Messiah. "One of the Jews that sat at meat with him, said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." The Pharisees demanded, "When the kingdom of God should come ?" and St. John Baptist came, saying, "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand : " a phrase he would not have used in preaching, had it not been understood.

56. There are other expressions that signified the Messiah, and his coming, which we shall take notice of as they come in our way. 3. By plain and direct words, declaring the doctrine of the Messiah ; speaking out that Jesus was he ; as we see the apostles did, when they went about preaching the gospel, after our Saviour's resurrection. This was the open, clear way, and that which one would think the Messiah himself, when he came, should have taken ; especially if it were of that moment, that upon men's believing him to be the Messiah depended the forgiveness of their sins. And yet we see that our Saviour did not ; but, on the contrary, for the most part, made no other discovery of himself, at least in Judea, and at the beginning of his ministry, but in the two former ways, which were more obscure ; not declaring himself to be the Messiah, any otherwise than as it might be gathered from the miracles he did, and the conformity of his life and actions with the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning him ; and from some general discourses of the kingdom of the Messiah being come, under the name of the "kingdom of God," and "of heaven." Nay, so far was he from publicly owning himself to be the Messiah, that he forbade the doing of it : "He asked his disciples, Whom do men say that I am ?

not be thought sufficient to justify the applying of the epithet *πονηρος*, "evil," to it, that scruple will be removed, if we take *εὐαγγελίου αἰών*, "this present world," here, for the Jewish constitution and nation together, in which sense it may very well be called evil, though the apostle, out of his wonted tenderness to his nation, forbears to name them openly, and uses a doubtful expression, which might comprehend the heathen world also, though he chiefly pointed at the Jews.—ED.

* Ch. ix. 25.

† Ibid. vii.

And they answered, John the Baptist ; but some say Elias, and others, one of the prophets." (So that it is evident, that even those who believed him an extraordinary person, knew not yet who he was, or that he gave himself out for the Messiah ; though this was in the third year of his ministry, and not a year before his death.) "And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am ? And Peter answered, and said unto him, Thou art the Messiah. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him."* And devils came out of many, crying, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God : and he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, that they knew him to be the Messiah."† "Unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God : and he straitly charged them that they should not make him known." Here again we may observe, from the comparing of the two texts, that "thou art the Son of God," or "thou art the Messiah," were indifferently used for the same thing. But to return to the matter in hand.

57. This concealment of himself will seem strange, in one who was come to bring light into the world, and was to suffer death for the testimony of the truth. This reservedness will be thought to look as if he had a mind to conceal himself, and not to be known to the world for the Messiah, nor to be believed on as such. But we shall be of another mind, and conclude this proceeding of his according to divine wisdom, and suited to a fuller manifestation and evidence of his being the Messiah, when we consider, that he was to fill out the time foretold of his ministry ; and, after a life illustrious in miracles and good works, attended with humility, meekness, patience, and sufferings, and every way conformable to the prophecies of him, should be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and with all quiet and submission be brought to the cross, though there were no guilt nor fault found in him. This could not have been, if, as soon as he appeared in public, and began to preach, he had presently professed himself to have been the Messiah, the King that owned that kingdom he published to be at hand : for the sanhedrim would then have laid hold on it, to have got him into their power, and thereby have taken away his life ; at least, they would have disturbed his ministry, and hindered the work he was about. That this made him cautious, and avoid, as much as he could, the occasions of provoking them, and falling into their hands, is plain from John vii. 1 : "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee ;" out of the way of the chief priests and rulers ; "for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." Thus making good what he foretold them at Jerusalem, when at the first passover, at his beginning to preach the gospel, upon his curing the man at the pool of Bethesda, they sought to kill him. John v. "Ye have not," says he, "his word abiding amongst you : for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." This was spoken more particularly to the Jews of Jerusalem, who were the forward men, zealous to take away his life ; and it imports that because of their unbelief and opposition to him, "the word of God," that

* Luke iv. 41.

† Mark iii. 11, 12.

is, the preaching of the kingdom of the Messiah, which is often called "the word of God," did not stay amongst them:—he could not stay amongst them, preach and explain to them the kingdom of the Messiah.

58. That the word of God here signifies the word of God that should make Jesus known to them to be the Messiah, is evident from the context; and this meaning of this place is made good by the event: for after this we hear no more of Jesus at Jerusalem, until the pentecost come twelvemonth; though it is not to be doubted but that he was there the next passover, and other feasts between, but privately. And now at Jerusalem, at the feast of pentecost, near fifteen months after, he says very little of any thing, and not a word of the kingdom of heaven being come or at hand; nor did he any miracle there. And returning to Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, it is plain, that from this time till then, which was a year and a half, he had not taught them at Jerusalem. For, 1. It is said, that he teaching in the temple at the feast of tabernacles, "The Jews marvelled, saying, how knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"* a sign they had not been used to his preaching; for if they had, they would not now have marvelled. 2. He says thus to them: "Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keep the law? Why go you about to kill me? One work, or miracle, I did here amongst you, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, and ye on the Sabbath-day circumcise a man; if a man on the Sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry with me, because I have made a man every way whole on the Sabbath-day?" Which is a direct defence of what he did at Jerusalem a year and a half before. The work he here speaks of we find reported, John v. He had not preached to them there from that time till this, but had made good what he then told them: "Ye have not the word of God remaining among you, because whom he hath sent, ye believe not:" whereby, I think, he signifies his not staying and being frequent amongst them at Jerusalem, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, because their great unbelief, opposition, and malice to him, would not permit it.

59. This was manifestly so in fact: for the first miracle he did at Jerusalem, which was at the second passover after his baptism, brought him in danger of his life. Hereupon we find he forbore preaching again there till the feast of tabernacles, immediately preceding his last passover: so that till half a year before his passion, he did but one miracle, and preached but once publicly at Jerusalem. These trials he made there; but found their unbelief such, that if he had staid and persisted to preach the good tidings of the kingdom, and to show himself by miracles among them, he could not have had time and freedom to do those works which his Father had given him to finish, as he says, verse 36. They all imaginable ways attacked him, and he as readily eluded all their attempts, by the wonderful quickness and conduct of an unparalleled wisdom. Here, at this feast of tabernacles, "The Scribes and Pharisees brought

unto him a woman taken in adultery; they say unto him, Master, Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned, but what sayest thou? This they said tempting him, that they might accuse him." It is plain they hoped that this criminal cause of a woman just taken in the fact, brought before him in the sight of the people, would draw him, if he would preserve the opinion of being the Messiah, their king, to give judgment in it, and by the exercise of such an authority expose him to the Roman deputy. Some such accusation they watched for; but they could never get any such advantage against him: he marvellously defeated their design, and without lessening himself, sent them away covered with shame and silence.

60. When, upon the curing of the withered hand on the Sabbath-day, "The Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians how they might destroy him, Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan, and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude; when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him, and he healed them all, and charged them that they should not make him known; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying, Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles: he shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets."*

61. And John xi. Upon the news of our Saviour's raising Lazarus from the dead, "the chief priests and Pharisees convened the sanhedrim, and said, What do we? For this man does many miracles. When from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly amongst the Jews." His miracles had now so much declared him to be the Messiah, that the Jews could no longer bear him, nor he trust himself amongst them; "but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples." This was but a little before his last passover, as appears by the following words: "And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand:" and he could not, now his miracles had made him so well known, have been secure the little time that remained till his hour was fully come, if he had not, with his wonted and necessary caution, withdrawn, and walked no more openly amongst the Jews, till his time (at the next passover) was fully come; and then again he appeared amongst them openly.

62. Nor would the Romans have suffered him, if he had gone about preaching that he was the king whom the Jews expected. Such an accusation would have been forwardly brought against him by the Jews, if they could have heard it out of his own mouth; and that had been his public doctrine to his followers, which was openly preached by his apostles after his death, when he appeared no more. And of this they were accused, Acts xvii. "But the Jews which believed not, moved

* John vii.

* Matt. xii; Mark iii.

with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them (Paul and Silas) not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also, whom Jason hath received : and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another king, one Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things : and when they had taken security of Jason and the other, they let them go."

63. Though the magistrates of the world had no great regard to the talk of a king, who had suffered death, and appeared no longer any where ; yet if our Saviour had openly declared this of himself in his life time, with a train of disciples and followers every where owning and crying him up for their king, the Roman governor of Judea could not have forborne to have taken notice of it, and have made use of their force against him. This the Jews were not mistaken in ; and therefore made use of it as the strongest accusation, and likeliest to prevail with Pilate against him for the taking away his life ; it being treason, and an unpardonable offence, which could not escape death from a Roman deputy, without the forfeiture of his own life. Thus then they accuse him to Pilate : "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar ; saying, that he himself is a king ;" or rather, the Messiah, the king.

64. Our Saviour indeed, now that his time was come, (and he in custody, and forsaken of all the world, and so out of all danger of raising any sedition or disturbance,) owns himself to Pilate to be a king : after having first told Pilate, "that his kingdom was not of this world ;" and for a king, in another world, Pilate knew that his master at Rome concerned not himself. But had there been any the least appearance of truth in the allegations of the Jews, that he had perverted the nation, forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, or drawing the people after him as their king, Pilate would not so readily have pronounced him innocent. But we see what he said to his accusers : Pilate, "when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers of the people, said unto them, You have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people ; and behold I having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof you accuse him ; no, nor yet Herod, for I sent you to him ; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done by him." And therefore finding a man of that mean condition, and innocent life, (no mover of seditions, or disturber of the public peace,) without a friend or a follower, he would have dismissed him, as a king of no consequence ; as an innocent man, falsely and maliciously accused by the Jews.

65. How necessary this caution was in our Saviour, to say or do nothing that might justly offend, or render him suspected to the Roman governor, and how glad the Jews would have been to have any such thing against him, we may see, Luke xx. 20 : "The chief priests and the Scribes watched him, and sent forth spies, who should feign them-

selves just men, that might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor." And the very thing wherein they hoped to entrap him in this place was paying tribute to Cæsar, which they afterwards falsely accused him of. And what would they have done, if he had before them professed himself to have been the Messiah, their king and deliverer ?

66. And here we may observe the wonderful providence of God, who had so ordered the state of the Jews, at the time when his Son was to come into the world, that though neither their civil constitution nor religious worship were dissolved, yet the power of life and death was taken from them ; whereby he had an opportunity to publish the kingdom of the Messiah ; that is, his own royalty, under the name of the kingdom of God and of heaven ; which the Jews well enough understood, and would certainly have put him to death for, had the power been in their own hands. But this being no matter of accusation to the Romans, hindered him not from speaking of the kingdom of heaven, as he did ; sometimes in reference to his appearing in the world, and being believed on by particular persons ; sometimes in reference to the power that should be given him by the Father at the resurrection ; and sometimes in reference to his coming to judge the world at the last day, in the full glory and completion of his kingdom. These were ways of declaring himself, which the Jews could lay no hold on, to bring him in danger with Pontius Pilate, and get him seized and put to death.

67. Another reason there was that hindered him as much as the former from professing himself in express words to be the Messiah ; and that was, that the whole nation of the Jews expecting at this time their Messiah, and deliverance by him from the subjection they were to a foreign yoke, the body of the people would certainly, upon his declaring himself to be the Messiah their king have rose up in rebellion, and set him at the head of them. And, indeed, the miracles that he did, so much disposed them to think him to be the Messiah, that, though shrouded under the obscurity of a mean condition, and a very private simple life ; though he passed for a Galilean, (his birth at Bethlehem being then concealed,) and assumed not to himself any power or authority, or so much as the name of the Messiah ; yet he could hardly avoid being set up by a tumult, and proclaimed their king. So John tells us, chap. vi. "Then those men, when they had seen the miracles that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When, therefore, Jesus perceived that they would come to take him by force to make him king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." This was upon his feeding of five thousand with five barley loaves and two fishes. So hard was it for him, doing those miracles which were necessary to testify his mission, and which often drew great multitudes after him, to keep the heady and hasty multitude from such disorder as would have involved him in it, and have disturbed the course, and cut short the time of his ministry, and drawn on him the reputation and death of a turbulent seditious malefactor ; contrary to the design of his coming, which was to be offered up a

lamb, blameless and void of offence ; his innocence appearing to all the world, even to him that delivered him up to be crucified. This it would have been impossible to have avoided, if in his preaching every where, he had openly assumed to himself the title of their Messiah ; which was all was wanting to set the people in a flame ; who, drawn by his miracles, and the hopes of finding a deliverer in so extraordinary a man, followed him in great numbers. We read every where of multitudes ; and in Luke xii. 1, of myriads that were gathered about him. This conflux of people, thus disposed, would not have failed, upon his declaring himself to be the Messiah, to have made a commotion, and with force set him up for their king. It is plain, therefore, from these two reasons, why (though he came to preach the gospel, and convert the world to a belief of his being the Messiah ; and though ye says so much of his kingdom, under the title of the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven) he yet makes it not his business to persuade them that he himself is the Messiah ; nor does, in his public preaching, declare himself to be him. He inculcates to the people, on all occasions, that the kingdom of God is come. He shows the way of admittance into this kingdom, viz. repentance and baptism ; and teaches the laws of it, viz. good life, according to the strictest rules of virtue and morality. But who the king was of this kingdom, he leaves to his miracles to point out to those who would consider what he did, and make the right use of it now ; or to witness to those who should hearken to the apostles hereafter, when they preached it in plain words, and called upon them to believe it, after his resurrection ; when there should be no longer room to fear that it should cause any disturbance in civil societies and the governments of the world. But he could not declare himself to be the Messiah, without manifest danger of tumult and sedition : and the miracles he did declared it so much, that he was fain often to hide himself, and withdraw from the concourse of the people. The leper that he cured, Mark i., though forbid to say any thing, yet “blazed it so abroad, that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places,” being in retirement, as appears from Luke v., and there “they came to him from every quarter.” And thus he did more than once.

68. This being premised, let us take a view of the promulgation of the gospel by our Saviour himself, and see what it was he taught the world, and required men to believe. The first beginning of his ministry, whereby he showed himself, seems to be at Cana in Galilee, soon after his baptism, where he turned water into wine ; of which St. John says thus : “This beginning of miracles Jesus made, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.” His disciples here believed in him ; but we hear not of any other preaching to them, but by this miracle, whereby he manifested his glory ; that is, of being the Messiah, the prince. So Nathanael, without any other preaching, but only our Saviour’s discovering to him that he knew him after an extraordinary manner, presently acknowledges him to be the Messiah ; crying, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel.” From hence, staying a few days at Capernaum, he goes to Jerusalem to the passover ;

and there he drives the traders out of the temple, saying, “Make not my Father’s house a house of merchandize.” Where we see he uses a phrase which, by interpretation, signifies that he was the Son of God, though at that time unregarded. Hereupon the Jews demand, “What sign dost thou show us, since thou doest these things ?” Jesus answered, Destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it again.” This is an instance of what way Jesus took to declare himself ; for it is plain by their reply the Jews understood him not, nor his disciples neither ; for it is said, “When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this to them : and they believed the Scripture, and the saying of Jesus to them.”

69. This therefore we may look on, in the beginning, as a pattern of Christ’s preaching, and showing himself to the Jews ; which he generally followed afterwards ; viz. such a manifestation of himself, as every one at present could not understand ; but yet carried such an evidence with it to those who were well disposed now, or would reflect on it when the whole course of his ministry was over, as was sufficient clearly to convince them that he was the Messiah. The reason of this method used by our Saviour, the Scripture gives us here, at this his first appearing in public, after his entrance upon his ministry, to be a rule and light to us in the whole course of it : for the next verse takes notice that many believed on him “because of his miracles,” (which was all the preaching they had.) It is said, “But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men ;”* that is, he declared not himself so openly to be the Messiah, their king, as to put himself in the power of the Jews, by laying himself open to their malice, who he knew would be so ready to lay hold on it to accuse him ; for, as the next verse shows, he knew well enough what was in them. We may here further observe, that “believing in his name,” signifies believing him to be the Messiah. Verse 22 tells us, that “many at the passover believed in his name, when they saw the miracles that he did ?” What other faith could these miracles produce in them who saw them, but that this was he of whom the Scripture spoke, who was to be their deliverer !

70. Whilst he was now at Jerusalem, Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, comes to him, to whom he preaches eternal life by faith in the Messiah, but in general terms, without naming himself to be that Messiah, though his whole discourse tends to it. This is all we hear of our Saviour the first year of his ministry, but only his baptism, fasting, and temptation in the beginning of it, and spending the rest of it, after the passover in Judea, with his disciples, baptizing there. But “when he knew that the Pharisees reported that he had made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea, and got out of their way again into Galilee. In his way back, by the well of Sichar, he discourses with the Samaritan woman ; and after having opened to her the true and spiritual worship which was at hand, which the woman presently understands of the times of the Messiah,

* John ii.

who was then looked for ; thus she answers : " I know that the Messiah cometh : when he is come, he will tell us all things." Whereupon our Saviour, though we hear no such thing from him in Jerusalem or Judea, or to Nicodemus ; yet here, to this Samaritan woman, he in plain and direct words owns and declares, that he himself, who talked with her, was the Messiah. This would seem very strange, that he should be more free and open to a Samaritan than he was to the Jews, were not the reason plain from what we have observed above. He was now out of Judea, with a people with whom the Jews had no commerce ; who were not disposed, out of envy, as the Jews were, to seek his life, or to accuse him to the Roman governor, or to make an insurrection to set a Jew up for their king. What the consequence was of his discourse with this Samaritan woman we have an account : " she left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did : is not this the Messiah ? And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did." So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them : and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word ; and said unto the woman, Now we believe not because of thy saying ; for we have heard him ourselves ; and we know (that is, are fully persuaded) that it is indeed the Messiah, the Saviour of the world." By comparing John iv. verse 39, with 41 and 42, it is plain, that " believing on him," signifies no more than believing him to be the Messiah.

71. From Sichar Jesus goes to Nazareth, the place he was bred up in, and there, reading in the synagogue a prophecy concerning the Messiah, out of the sixty-first of Isaiah, he tells them, " This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." But being in danger of his life at Nazareth, he leaves it for Capernaum ; and then, as St. Matthew informs us, " he began to preach, and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Or, as St. Mark has it, " preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand ; repent ye, and believe in the gospel ;" that is, believe this good news. This removing to Capernaum, and seating himself there in the borders of Zabulon and Naphthali, was, as St. Matthew observes, that a prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled. Thus the actions and circumstances of his life, answered the prophecies, and declared him to be the Messiah. And by what St. Mark says in this place, it is manifest that the gospel which he preached, and required them to believe, was no other but the good tidings of the coming of the Messiah, and of his kingdom, the time being now fulfilled. In his way to Capernaum, being come to Cana, a nobleman of Capernaum came to him, " and besought him that he would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Then he returning homewards, and finding that his son began to " mend at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth ; he himself believed, and his whole house." Here this nobleman is, by the apostle,

pronounced to be a believer. And what does he believe ? even that which Jesus complains, " they would not believe, except they saw signs and wonders ; which could be nothing but what those of Samaria, in the same chapter, believed ; viz. that he was the Messiah : for we no where in the gospel hear of any thing else that had been proposed to be believed by them.

72. Having done miracles, and cured all their sick at Capernaum, he says, " Let us go to the adjoining towns, that I may preach there also ; for therefore came I forth." Or, as St. Luke has it, chap. iv., he tells the multitude, who would have kept him, that he might not go from them : " I must evangelize," or tell the good tidings of the " kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent." And St. Matthew, chap. iv., tells us how he executed this commission he was sent on. " And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and curing all diseases." This then was what he was sent to preach every where, viz. the gospel of the kingdom of the Messiah ; and by the miracles and good he did, let them know who was the Messiah.

73. Hence he goes up to Jerusalem, to the second passover since the beginning of his ministry. And here discoursing to the Jews, who sought to kill him, upon occasion of the man whom he had cured carrying his bed on the Sabbath-day, and for making God his Father, he tells them, that he wrought these things by the power of God, and that he shall do greater things ; for that the dead shall, at his summons, be raised ; and that he, by a power committed to him from his Father, shall judge them ; and that he is sent by his Father ; and that whoever shall hear his word, and believe in him that sent him, has eternal life. This, though a clear description of the Messiah, yet we may observe that here, to the angry Jews, who sought to kill him, he says not a word of his kingdom, nor so much as names the Messiah ; but yet that he is the Son of God, and sent from God, he refers them to the testimony of John the Baptist, to the testimony of his own miracles, and of God himself in the voice from heaven, and of the Scriptures, and of Moses. He leaves them to learn from these the truth they were to believe, viz. that he was the Messiah sent from God. This you may read more at large, John v.

74. The next place where we find him preaching was on the mount. This is by much the longest sermon we have of his any where ; and, in all likelihood, to the greatest auditory : for it appears to have been to the people gathered to him from Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, and from beyond Jordan ; and that came out of Idumea, and from Tyre and Sidon, mentioned Mark iii. and Luke vi. But in this whole sermon of his we do not find one word of believing, and therefore no mention of the Messiah, or any intimation to the people who himself was : the reason whereof we may gather from Matt. xii., where " Christ forbids them to make him known ;" which supposes them to know already who he was. For that this twelfth chapter of Matthew ought to precede the sermon in the mount is plain, by comparing it with Mark ii., beginning at verse 13, to Mark iii. 8, and comparing those chapters of St. Mark with Luke vi

And I desire my reader, once for all, here to take notice, that I have all along observed the order of time in our Saviour's preaching, and have not, as I think, passed by any of his discourses. In this sermon our Saviour only teaches them what were the laws of his kingdom, and what they must do who were admitted into it; of which I shall have occasion to speak more at large in another place, being at present only enquiring what our Saviour proposed as matter of faith to be believed.

75. After this, John the Baptist sends to him this message, asking,—“Art thou he that should come, or do we expect another?” That is, in short, art thou the Messiah? And if thou art, why dost thou let me, thy forerunner, languish in prison?—Must I expect deliverance from any other? To which Jesus returns this answer: “Tell John what you have seen and heard:—the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached; and blessed is he who is not offended in me.” What it is to be “offended” or “scandalized” in him we may see by comparing Matt. xiii. 23, and Mark iv. 17, with Luke viii. 13; for what the two first call *scandalized*, the last calls *standing off from, or forsaking*; that is, not receiving him as the Messiah, (vide Mark vi. 1—6,) or revolting from him. Here Jesus refers John, as he did the Jews before, to the testimony of his miracles, to know who he was; and this was generally his preaching, whereby he declared himself to be the Messiah; who was the only prophet to come, whom the Jews had any expectation of; nor did they look for any other person to be sent to them with the power of miracles, but only the Messiah. His miracles, we see by his answer to John the Baptist, he thought a sufficient declaration among them that he was the Messiah. And therefore, upon his curing the possessed of the devil, the dumb, and blind, Matt. xii., the people who saw the miracle said, “Is not this the Son of David?” as much as to say, Is not this the Messiah!—Whereat the Pharisees being offended, said, he cast out devils by Beelzebub. Jesus showing the falsehood and vanity of their blasphemy, justifies the conclusion the people made from this miracle, saying, that his casting out devils by the Spirit of God, was an evidence that the kingdom of the Messiah was come.

76. One thing more there was in the miracles done by his disciples, which showed him to be the Messiah—that they were done in his name. “In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk,” says St. Peter to the lame man whom he cured in the temple, Acts iii. And how far the power of that name reached, they themselves seem to wonder, Luke x.; “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name.” From this message from John the Baptist, he takes occasion to tell the people, that John was the forerunner of the Messiah; that from the time of John the Baptist the kingdom of the Messiah began; to which time all the prophets and the law pointed.* “Afterwards he went through every city and village, preaching and showing the good tidings of the kingdom of God.” Here we see, as every where,

what his preaching was, and consequently what was to be believed.

77. Soon after, he preaches from a boat to the people on the shore. His sermon at large we may read, Matt. xiii. Mark iv. and Luke viii. But this is very observable, that this second sermon of his here, is quite different from his former in the mount: for that was all so plain and intelligible that nothing could be more so; whereas this is all so involved in parables, that even the apostles themselves did not understand it. If we inquire into the reason of this, we shall possibly have some light from the different subjects of these two sermons. There he preached to the people only morality; clearing the precepts of the law from the false glosses which were received in those days, and setting forth the duties of a good life in their full obligation and extent,* beyond what the judiciary laws of the Israelites did, or the civil laws of any country could prescribe or take notice of. But here, in this sermon by the seaside, he speaks of nothing but the kingdom of the Messiah, which he does all in parables. One reason whereof St. Matthew gives us, chap. xiii. “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.” Another reason our Saviour himself gives of it: “Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but whosoever hath not,” that is, improves not the talents that he hath, “from him shall be taken away even that he hath.”

78. One thing it may not be amiss to observe, that our Saviour here, in the explication of the first of these parables to his apostles, calls the preaching of the kingdom of the Messiah, simply, “the Word;” and, Luke viii. 21, “the Word of God:” from whence St. Luke, in the Acts, often mentions it under the name of “the Word,” and

* Every thing necessary to make a man a Christian is clearly delivered in the New Testament.—This Locke frequently insists on, and in this all wise and moderate men agree. Milton, in Scripture more deeply read than Locke, or, perhaps, than any other writer with whom I am acquainted, observes on this subject—“It is true, there be some books, and especially some places in those books, that remain clouded; yet ever that which is most necessary to be known is most easy; and that which is most difficult, so far expounds itself ever, as to tell us how little it imports our saving knowledge. Hence, to infer a general obscurity over all the texts, is a mere suggestion of the devil to dissuade men from reading it, and casts an aspersion of dishonor both upon the mercy, truth, and wisdom of God. We count it no gentleness or fair dealing in a man of power amongst us, to require strict and punctual obedience, and yet give out all his commands ambiguous and obscure, we should think he had a plot upon us; certainly such commands were no commands, but snares. The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness, the darkness and crookedness is our own. The wisdom of God created understanding, fit and proportionable to truth, the object and end of it, as the eye to the thing visible.”—Edo.

* Luke vii.; Matt. xi.

"the Word of God," as we have elsewhere observed; to which I shall here add that of Acts viii. 4:—"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word;" which word, as we have found by examining what they preached all through their history, was nothing but this, that "Jesus was the Messiah:" I mean, this was all the doctrine they proposed to be believed: for what they taught, as well as our Saviour, contained a great deal more; but that concerned practice, and not belief. And therefore our Saviour says, in the place before quoted, Luke viii. 21,—"They are my mother and my brethren who hear the word of God, and do it:" obeying the law of the Messiah, their king, being no less required than their believing that Jesus was the Messiah, the king and deliverer that was promised them. Matt. ix. we have an account again of his preaching; what it was and how:—"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease amongst the people." He acquainted them that the kingdom of the Messiah was come, and left it to his miracles to instruct and convince them that he was the Messiah.

79. When he sent his apostles abroad, their commission to preach we have in these words:—"As ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand: heal the sick," &c. All that they had to preach was that the kingdom of the Messiah was come. Whosoever should not receive them, the messengers of this good tidings, nor hearken to their message, incurred a heavier doom than Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of judgment. But, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, I will confess him before my Father who is in heaven." What this confessing of Christ is, we may see by comparing John xii. 4, with ix. 22: "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." And "these words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was the Messiah, he should be put out of the synagogue." By which places it is evident, that to confess him, was to confess that he was the Messiah. From which give me leave to observe also, (what I have cleared from other places, but cannot be too often remarked, because of the different sense which has been put upon that phrase,) viz. that believing on or in him (for *αὐτὸν* is rendered either way by the English translation) signifies believing that he was the Messiah. For many of the rulers (the text says) believed on him; but they durst not confess what they believed, "for fear they should be put out of the synagogue." Now the offence for which it was agreed that any one should be put out of the synagogue was, if he "did confess that Jesus was the Messiah." Hence we may have a clear understanding of that passage of St. Paul to the Romans,* where he tells them positively what is the faith he preaches: "That is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine

heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:" and that also of 1 John iv. 14, 15: "We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world: whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." Where confessing Jesus to be the Son of God, is the same with confessing him to be the Messiah; those two expressions being understood, amongst the Jews, to signify the same thing, as we have shown already. How calling him the Son of God came to signify that he was the Messiah, would not be hard to show; but it is enough that it appears plainly that it was so used, and had that import amongst the Jews at that time; which if any one desires to have further evidenced to him, he may add Matt. xxvi. 63, John vi. 69, and xi. 27, and xx. 31, to those places before occasionally taken notice of.

80. As was the apostles' commission, such was their performance, as we read Luke ix. 6: "They departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where." Jesus bid them preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And St. Luke tells us, they went through the towns, preaching the gospel; a word which in Saxon answers well the Greek *Ἐυαγγέλιον*, and signifies, as that does, "good news." So that what the inspired writers call the gospel, is nothing but the good tidings that the Messiah and his kingdom was come; and so it is to be understood in the New Testament; and so the angel calls it "good tidings of great joy," bringing the first news of our Saviour's birth. And this seems to be all that his disciples were at that time sent to preach. So Luke ix. 59, 60. To him that would have excused his present attendance, because of burying his father, "Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." When I say this was all they were to preach, I must be understood, that this was the faith they preached; but with it they joined obedience to the Messiah, whom they received for their king. So likewise when he sent out the seventy, Luke x. their commission was in these words: "Heal the sick, and say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

81. After the return of his apostles to him, he sits down with them on a mountain; and a great multitude being gathered about them, St. Luke tells us, "The people followed him, and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God; and healed them that had need of healing." This was his preaching to this assembly, which consisted of five thousand men, besides women and children; all which great multitude he fed with five loaves and two fishes. And what this miracle wrought upon them St. John tells us,—chap. vi.: "Then these men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, 'This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world;'" that is, the Messiah: for the Messiah was the only person that they expected from God, and this the time they looked for him. And hence John the Baptist, Matt. xi. 3, styles him,—*"He that should come;"* as in other places, *"come from God,"* or *"sent from God,"* are phrases used for the Messiah. Here we see our Saviour keeps to

* Rom. x. 8, 9.

his usual method of preaching : he speaks to them of the kingdom of God, and does miracles, by which they might understand him to be the Messiah, whose kingdom he spake of. And here we have the reason also, why he so much concealed himself, and forbore to own his being the Messiah. For what the consequence was of the multitudes' but thinking him so, when they were got together, St. John tells us in the very next words : "When Jesus then perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain, himself alone." If they were so ready to set him up for their king, only because they gathered from his miracles that he was the Messiah, whilst he himself said nothing of it, what would not the people have done, and what would not the Scribes and Pharisees have had an opportunity to accuse him of, if he had openly professed himself to have been the Messiah, that king they looked for? But this we have taken notice of already.

82. From thence, going to Capernaum, whither he was followed by a great part of the people, whom he had the day before so miraculously fed, he, upon the occasion of their following him for the loaves, bid them seek for the meat that endureth to eternal life : and thereupon declares to them his being sent from the Father, and that those who believed in him should be raised to eternal life ; but all this very much involved in a mixture of allegorical terms of eating, and of bread ; bread of life, which came down from heaven, &c. which is all comprehended and expounded in these short and plain words : "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The sum of all which discourse is, that he was the Messiah sent from God ; and that those who believed him to be so should be raised from the dead, at the last day, to eternal life. These whom he spoke to, were of those who the day before would by force have made him king ; and therefore it is no wonder he should speak to them of himself and his kingdom and subjects, in obscure and mystical terms, and such as should offend those who looked for nothing but the grandeur of a temporal kingdom in this world, and the protection and prosperity they had promised themselves under it. The hopes of such a kingdom, now that they had found a man that did miracles, and therefore concluded to be the deliverer they expected, had the day before almost drawn them into an open insurrection, and involved our Saviour in it. This he thought fit to put a stop to, they still following him, it is like, with the same design ; and therefore, though he here speaks to them of his kingdom, it was in a way that so plainly balked their expectation, and shocked them, that when they found themselves disappointed of those vain hopes ; and that he talked of their eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, that they might have life ; the Jews said,—"How can this man give us his flesh to eat? And many, even of his disciples, said, it was an hard saying, who can bear it?" and so were scandalized in him, and forsook him. But what the true meaning of this discourse of our Saviour was, the confession of St. Peter, who understood it better, and answered for the rest of the apostles, shows :

when Jesus asked him, "Will ye also go away?—Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" that is, thou teachest us the way to attain eternal life ; and, accordingly, "we believe, and are sure that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God." This was the eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, whereby those who did so had eternal life.

83. Some time after this, he inquires of his disciples, whom the people took him for. They telling him, for John the Baptist, or one of the old prophets risen from the dead ; he asked, what they themselves thought. And here again Peter answers in these words, Mark viii. 29 : "Thou art the Messiah," Luke ix. 20 ; "The Messiah of God;" and Matt. xvi. 16, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God;" which expressions, we may hence gather, amount to the same thing. Whereupon our Saviour tells Peter, Matt. xvi., "that this was such a truth as flesh and blood could not reveal to him, but only his Father who was in heaven;" and that this was the foundation on which he was to build his church. By all the parts of which passage it is more than probable, that he had never yet told his apostles in direct words that he was the Messiah, but that they had gathered it from his life and miracles : for which we may imagine to ourselves this probable reason ; because, that if he had familiarly, and in direct terms, talked to his apostles in private that he was the Messiah, the prince, of whose kingdom he preached so much in public every where, Judas, whom he knew false and treacherous, would have been readily made use of to testify against him in a matter that would have been really criminal, to the Roman governor. This, perhaps, may help to clear to us that seemingly abrupt reply of our Saviour to his apostles, John vi. 70, when they confessed him to be the Messiah. I will, for the better explaining of it, set down the passage at large. Peter having said, "We believe, and are sure that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God ; Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is *διαβολος*?" This is a reply seeming, at first sight, nothing to the purpose ; when yet it is sure all our Saviour's discourses were wise and pertinent. It seems, therefore, to me to carry this sense, to be understood afterwards by the eleven, (as that of destroying the temple, and raising it again in three days was,) when they should reflect on it after his being betrayed by Judas :—You have confessed, and believe the truth concerning me : I am the Messiah, your king ; but do not wonder at it, that I have never openly declared it to you ; for amongst you twelve, whom I have chosen to be with me, there is one who is an informer, or false accuser, (for so the Greek word signifies, and may possibly here be so translated, rather than devil,) who, if I had owned myself in plain words to have been the Messiah, the king of Israel, would have betrayed me, and informed against me.

84. That he was yet cautious of owning himself to his apostles positively to be the Messiah, appears further from the manner wherein he tells Peter, that he will build his church upon that confession of his, that he was the Messiah. I say unto thee, "Thou art Cephas," or a rock ; "and

upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Words too doubtful to be laid hold on against him, as a testimony that he professed himself to be the Messiah, especially if we join with them the following words: "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and what thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and what thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Which, being said personally to Peter, rendered the foregoing words of our Saviour (wherein he declares the fundamental article of his church to be the believing him to be the Messiah) the more obscure and doubtful, and less liable to be made use of against him; but yet such as might afterwards be understood. And for the same reason he yet here again forbids the apostles to say that he was the Messiah.

85. The probability of this, viz., that he had not yet told the apostles themselves plainly that he was the Messiah, is confirmed by what our Saviour says to them, John xv.: "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends;" viz. in the foregoing verse; "for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." This was in his last discourse with them after Judas was gone out; wherein he committed to them the great secret, by speaking of the kingdom as his, as appears from Luke xxii. 30, and telling them several other particulars about it, whence he had it, what kingdom it was, how to be administered, and what share they were to have in it, &c. From whence it is plain, that till just before he was laid hold on, the very moment he was parting with his apostles, he had kept them as servants in ignorance; but now had discovered himself openly as to his friends.

86. "From this time," say the evangelists, "Jesus began to show to his disciples (that is, his apostles, who are often called disciples) that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and Scribes; and be killed, and be raised again the third day." These, though all marks of the Messiah, yet how little understood by the apostles, or suited to their expectation of the Messiah, appears from Peter's rebuking him for it in the words, Matt. xvi. 22.—Peter had twice before owned him to be the Messiah, and yet he cannot here bear that he should suffer, and be put to death, and be raised again; whereby we may perceive, how little yet Jesus had explained to the apostles what personally concerned himself. They had been a good while witnesses of his life and miracles, and thereby being grown into a belief that he was the Messiah, were in some degree prepared to receive the particulars that were to fill up the character, and answer the prophecies concerning him. This, from henceforth, he began to open to them, (though in a way which the Jews could not form an accusation out of,) the time of the accomplishment of all, in his sufferings, death, and resurrection, now drawing on: for this was in the last year of his life; he being to meet the Jews at Jerusalem but once more at the passover, and then they should have their will upon him, and therefore he might now begin to be a little more open concerning himself; though yet so as to keep himself out of

the reach of any accusation that might appear just or weighty to the Roman deputy.

87. After his reprimand to Peter, telling him that he "savored not the things of God, but of man," Mark viii., he calls the people to him, and prepares those who would be his disciples, for suffering; telling them, "Whoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels:" and then subjoins two great and solemn acts, wherein he should show himself to be the Messiah, the king; "for the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall render every man according to his works." This is evidently meant of the glorious appearance of his kingdom, when he shall come to judge the world at the last day; described more at large, Matt. xxv. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand," &c.

88. But what follows in the place above quoted, Matt. xvi. 28: "Verily, verily, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom,"—importing that dominion, which some there should see him exercise over the nation of the Jews,—was so covered, by being annexed to the preceding verse, 27, (where he spoke of the manifestation and glory of his kingdom at the day of judgment,) that though his plain meaning here, in verse 28, be, that the appearance and visible exercise of his kingly power in his kingdom was so near, that some there should live to see it; yet if the foregoing words had not cast a shadow over these latter, but they had been left plainly to be understood, as they plainly signified, that he should be a king, and that it was so near, that some there should see him in his kingdom, this might have been laid hold on, and made the matter of a plausible and seemingly just accusation against him by the Jews, before Pilate. This seems to be the reason of our Saviour's inverting here the order of the two solemn manifestations to the world of his rule and power; thereby perplexing at present his meaning, and securing himself, as was necessary, from the malice of the Jews, which always lay at catch to entrap him, and accuse him to the Roman governor; and would, no doubt, have been ready to have alleged these words, "Some here shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom," against him as criminal, had not their meaning been, by the former verse, perplexed, and the sense at that time rendered unintelligible, and not applicable by any of his auditors to a sense that might have been prejudicial to him before Pontius Pilate: for how well the chief of the Jews were disposed towards him St. Luke tells us, chap. xi.: "Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him:" which may be a reason to satisfy us of the seemingly doubtful and obscure way of speaking used by our Saviour in other places; his circumstances being such, that without such a prudent carriage and reservedness, he could not have gone through the work which he came to do; nor have performed all the

parts of it, in a way correspondent to the descriptions given of the Messiah, and which would be afterwards fully understood to belong to him, when he had left the world.

89. After this, Matt. xvii., he, without saying it in direct words, begins, as it were, to own himself to his apostles to be the Messiah, by assuring them, that as the Scribes, according to the prophecy of Malachi,* rightly said, that Elias was to usher in the Messiah; so indeed Elias was already come, though the Jews knew him not, and treated him ill: whereby "they understood that he spake to them of John the Baptist." And a little after, he somewhat more plainly intimates that he is the Messiah in these words: "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to the Messiah." This, as I remember, is the first place where our Saviour ever mentioned the name of Messiah; and the first time that he went so far towards the owning, to any of the Jewish nation, himself to be him.

90. In his way to Jerusalem, bidding one follow him who would first bury his father, "Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." And, sending out the seventy disciples, he says to them, "Heal the sick, and say, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." He had nothing else for these, or for his apostles, or any one, it seems, to preach but the good news of the coming of the kingdom of the Messiah. And if any city would not receive them, he bids them, Go into the streets of the same, and say, "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, do we wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." This they were to take notice of, as that which they should dearly answer for, viz. that they had not with faith received the good tidings of the kingdom of the Messiah.

91. After this his brethren say unto him, John vii. 2, 3, 4, (the feast of tabernacles being near,) "Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples may see the works that thou doest: for there is no man that does any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world." Here his brethren, which the next verse tells us "did not believe him," seem to upbraid him with the inconsistency of his carriage; as if he designed to be received for the Messiah, and yet was afraid to show himself: to whom he justified his conduct, (mentioned verse 1.) in the following verses, by telling them, "that the world (meaning the Jews especially) hated him, because he testified of it, that the works thereof are evil; and that his time was not yet fully come," wherein to quit his reserve, and abandon himself freely to their malice and fury. Therefore, though he "went up unto the feast, it was not openly, but as it were in secret, verse 10. And here, coming into the temple about the middle of the feast, he justifies his being sent from God; and that he had not done any thing against the law, in curing the man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath-day; which, though done above a year and a half before, they made use of as a pretence to destroy him. But

what was the true reason of seeking his life, appears from what we have in this seventh chapter: "Then said some of them at Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Messiah? Howbeit, we know this man whence he is; but when the Messiah cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought [an occasion] to take him; but no man lays hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When the Messiah cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to take him. Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go to him that sent me: ye shall seek me, and not find me; and where I am, there you cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him." Here we find, that the great fault in our Saviour, and the great provocation to the Jews, was, his being taken for the Messiah, and doing such things as made the people "believe in him;" that is, believe that he was the Messiah. Here also our Saviour declares, in words very easy to be understood, at least after his resurrection, that he was the Messiah: for if he were "sent from God," and did his miracles by the Spirit of God, there could be no doubt but he was the Messiah. But yet this declaration was in a way that the Pharisees and priests could not lay hold on to make an accusation of to the disturbance of his ministry, or the seizure of his person, how much soever they desired it: for his time was not yet come. The officers they had sent to apprehend him, charmed with his discourse, returned without laying hands on him; and when the chief priests asked them, "why they brought him not?" they answered, "Never man spake like this man." Whereupon the Pharisees reply, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed on him! But this people, who know not the law, are cursed." This shows what was meant by "believing on him;" viz. believing that he was the Messiah: for, say they, have any of the rulers, who are skilled in the law, or of the devout and learned Pharisees, acknowledged him to be the Messiah? For as for those who, in the division among the people concerning him, say, "that he is the Messiah," they are ignorant and vile wretches, knowing nothing of the Scripture; and being accursed, are given by God to be deceived by this impostor, and to take him for the Messiah. Therefore, notwithstanding their desire to lay hold on him, he goes on: and "In the last and great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And thus he here again declares himself to be the Messiah; but in the prophetic style, as we see by the next verse of this chapter, and those places in

* Chap. iv. 5.

the Old Testament that these words of our Saviour refer to. In the next chapter, John viii., all that he says concerning himself, and what they were to believe, tends to this, viz. that he was sent from God his Father, and that, if they did not believe that he was the Messiah, they should die in their sins: but this in a way, as St. John observes, that they did not well understand. But our Saviour himself tells them, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he."

92. Going from them he cures the man born blind, whom meeting with again, after the Jews had questioned him, and cast him out, "Jesus said to him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe."* Here we see this man is pronounced a believer, when all that was proposed to him to believe was, that Jesus was the Son of God; which was, as we have already shown, to believe that he was the Messiah. In the next chapter, John x., he declares the laying down of his life for both Jews and Gentiles; but in a parable which they understood not.

93. As he was going to the feast of the dedication, the Pharisees ask him, "When the kingdom of God;" that is, of the Messiah, "should come?" He answers, that it shall not come with pomp and observation, and great concourse; but that it was already begun amongst them. If he had stopped here, the sense had been so plain that they could hardly have mistaken him; or have doubted but that he meant that the Messiah was already come and amongst them; and so might have been prone to infer, that Jesus took upon him to be him. But here, as in the place before taken notice of, subjoining to this future revelation of himself, both in his coming to execute vengeance on the Jews, and in his coming to judgment mixed together, he so involved his sense, that it was not easy to understand him. And therefore the Jews came to him again in the temple, John x., and said, "How long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered, I told ye, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I told you." The believing here, which he accuses them of not doing, is plainly their not believing him to be the Messiah, as the foregoing words evince; and in the same sense it is evidently meant in the following verses of this chapter.

94. From hence, Jesus going to Barbara, and thence returning into Bethany, upon Lazarus's death, Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet he shall live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die for ever." So I understand *αποθηναι εις τον αιωνα*, answerable to *ζησεται εις τον αιωνα*, of the Septuagint, Gen. iii. 22, or John vi. 51, which we read right in our English translation, "live for ever;" but whether this saying of our Saviour here can with truth be translated, "He, that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die," will be apt to be questioned. But to go on, "Believest thou this? She said unto him,

Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, which should come into the world." This she gives as a full answer to our Saviour's demands; this being that faith which whoever had, wanted no more to make them believers.

95. We may observe further, in this same story of the raising of Lazarus, what faith it was our Saviour expected, by what he says, verses 41, 42: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I know that thou hearest me always. But because of the people who stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." And what the consequence of it was, we may see, verse 45; "Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him:" which belief was, that he was sent from the Father; which, in other words, was, that he was the Messiah. That this is the meaning, in the Evangelists, of the phrase of "believing on him," we have a demonstration in the following words, verses 47, 48: "Then gathered the chief priests and Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? For this man does many miracles; and if we let him alone, all men will believe on him." Those who here say, all men would believe on him, were the chief priests and Pharisees, his enemies, who sought his life; and therefore could have no other sense nor thought of this faith in him, which they spake of, but only the believing him to be the Messiah: and that that was their meaning the adjoining words show: "If we let him alone, all the world will believe on him;" that is, believe him to be the Messiah. And the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. Which reasoning of theirs was thus grounded:—if we stand still, and let the people believe on him, (that is, receive him for the Messiah,) they will thereby take him and set him up for their king, and expect deliverance by him; which will draw the Roman arms upon us, to the destruction of us and our country. The Romans could not be thought to be at all concerned in any other belief whatsoever that the people might have on him. It is therefore plain, that "believing on him" was, by the writers of the gospel, understood to mean, the "believing him to be the Messiah." "The sanhedrim, therefore, from that day forth consulted to put him to death. Jesus, therefore, walked not yet (for so the word *εν* signifies; and so I think it ought here to be translated) boldly," or openfaced "among the Jews;" that is, of Jerusalem. "*Εν* cannot well here be translated "no more," because within a very short time after he appeared openly, at the passover, and by his miracles and speech declared himself more freely than ever he had done; and all the week before his passion taught daily in the temple.* The meaning of this place seems therefore to be this: that his time being not yet come, he durst not show himself openly and confidently before the Scribes and Pharisees, and those of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, who were full of malice against him, and resolved his death; "but went thence into a country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there continued with his disciples, to keep himself out of the way till the passover, which was nigh at hand." In his return thither, he takes the twelve aside, and tells them

* John ix.

* Matt. xx. 17; Mark x. 32; Luke xviii. 31, &c.

beforehand what should happen to him at Jerusalem, whither they were now going; and that all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man should be accomplished; that he should be betrayed to the chief priests and Scribes; and that they should condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; that he should be mocked, and spit on, and scourged, and put to death; and the third day he should rise again. But St. Luke tells us, that the apostles "understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them; neither knew they the things which were spoken." They believed him to be the Son of God, the Messiah sent from the Father; but their notion of the Messiah was the same with the rest of the Jews; that he should be a temporal prince and deliverer. Accordingly we see, Mark x., that even in this their last journey with him to Jerusalem, two of them, James and John, coming to him, and falling at his feet, said, "Grant unto us, that we may sit, one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory;" or, as St. Matthew has it, chapter xx., "in thy kingdom." That which distinguished them from the unbelieving Jews was, that they believed Jesus to be the very Messiah, and so received him as their king and Lord.

96. And now the hour being come that the Son of man should be glorified, he, without his usual reserve, makes his public entry into "Jerusalem, riding on a young ass: as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion, behold thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." But "these things," saith St. John, "his disciples understood not at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him."—Though the apostles believed him to be the Messiah, yet there were many occurrences of his life which they understood not (at the time when they happened) to be foretold of the Messiah; which after his ascension they found exactly to quadrate. Thus, according to what was foretold of him, he rode into the city, "all the people crying, Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord." This was so open a declaration of his being the Messiah, that "some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples." But he was so far now from stopping them, or disowning this their acknowledgment of his being the Messiah, that he "said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." And again, upon the like occasion of their crying, "Hosanna, to the Son of David," in the temple, when "the chief priests and Scribes were sore displeased, and said unto him, Hearest thou what they say? Jesus said unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" And now, "he cures the blind and the lame openly in the temple. And when the chief priests and Scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, Hosanna, they were enraged." One would not think, that after the multitude of miracles that our Saviour had now been doing for above three years together, that the curing the lame and blind should so much move them. But we must re-

member that though his ministry had abounded with miracles, yet the most of them had been done about Galilee, and in parts remote from Jerusalem. There is but one left upon record hitherto done in that city; and that had so ill a reception, that they sought his life for it; as we may read, John v. 16. And therefore we hear not of his being at the next passover, because he was there only privately, as an ordinary Jew: the reason whereof we may read, John vii. 1: "After these things, Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

97. Hence we may guess the reason why St. John omitted the mention of his being at Jerusalem at the third passover after his baptism; probably because he did nothing memorable there. Indeed, when he was at the feast of tabernacles, immediately preceding this last passover, he cured the man born blind: but it appears not to have been done in Jerusalem itself, but in the way as he retired to the Mount of Olives; for there seems to have been nobody by when he did it, but his apostles. Compare verse 2, with verse 8, 10, of St. John ix. This, at least, is remarkable, that neither the cure of this blind man, nor that of the other infirm man, at the passover above a twelvemonth before at Jerusalem, was done in the sight of the Scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, or rulers. Nor was it without reason, that in the former part of his ministry he was cautious of showing himself to them to be the Messiah. But now that he was come to the last scene of his life, and that the passover was come, the appointed time wherein he was to complete the work he came for, in his death and resurrection, he does many things in Jerusalem itself, before the face of the Scribes, Pharisees, and whole body of the Jewish nation, to manifest himself to be the Messiah. And, as St. Luke says, "He taught daily in the temple; but the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the chief of the people, sought to destroy him; and could not find what they might do, for all the people were very attentive to hear him." What he taught we are not left to guess, by what we have found him constantly preaching elsewhere; but St. Luke tells us, chap. xx., "He taught in the temple, and evangelized;" or, as we translate it, "preached the gospel:" which, as we have showed, was the making known to them the good news of the kingdom of the Messiah. And this we shall find he did, in what now remains of his history.

98. In the first discourse of his, which we find upon record after this, John xii. 20, &c. he foretells his crucifixion, and the belief of all sorts, both Jews and Gentiles, on him after that. Whereupon the people say to him, "We have heard, out of the law, that the Messiah abideth for ever; and how sayest thou, that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" In his answer he plainly designs himself, under the name of Light; which was what he had declared himself to them to be, the last time that they had seen him in Jerusalem. For then, at the feast of tabernacles, but six months before, he tells them in the very place where he now is, viz. in the temple, "I am the Light of the world; whosoever follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life:" as we may read, John viii. 12, and ix. 5,

he says, "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." But neither here, nor any where else, does he, even in these four or five last days of his life, (though he knew his hour was come, and was prepared for his death, and scrupled not to manifest himself to the rulers of the Jews to be the Messiah, by doing miracles before them in the temple,) ever once in direct words own himself to the Jews to be the Messiah; though by miracles, and other ways, he did every where make it known to them, so that it might be understood. This could not be without some reason; and the preservation of his life, which he came now to Jerusalem on purpose to lay down, could not be it. What other reason could it then be, but the same which had made him use caution in the former part of his ministry, so to conduct himself that he might do the work which he came for, and in all parts answer the character given of the Messiah in the law and the prophets? He had fulfilled the time of his ministry, and now taught and did miracles openly in the temple, before the rulers and the people, not fearing to be seized: but he would not be seized for any thing that might make him a criminal to the government; and therefore he avoided giving those, who in the division that was about him inclined towards him, occasion of tumult for his sake; or to the Jews, his enemies, matter of just accusation against him out of his own mouth, by professing himself to be the Messiah, the king of Israel, in direct words. It was enough, that by words and deeds he declared it so to them, that they could not but understand him; which it is plain they did, Luke xx. 16, 19; Matt. xxi. 45. But yet neither his actions, which were only doing of good, nor words, which were mystical and parabolical, (as we may see, Matt. xxi. and xxii., and the parallel places of Matthew and Luke,) nor any of his ways of making himself known to be the Messiah, could be brought in testimony, or urged against him as opposite or dangerous to the government. This preserved him from being condemned as a malefactor, and procured him a testimony from the Roman governor, his judge, that he was an innocent man, sacrificed to the envy of the Jewish nation. So that he avoided saying that he was the Messiah, that to those who could call to mind his life and death after his resurrection, he might the more clearly appear to be so. It is further to be remarked, that though he often appeals to the testimony of his miracles who he is, yet he never tells the Jews that he was born at Bethlehem, to remove the prejudice that lay against him, while he passed for a Galilean, and which was urged as a proof that he was not the Messiah, John vii. 41, 42. The healing of the sick, and doing of good miraculously, could be no crime in him, nor accusation against him: but the naming of Bethlehem for his birth-place, might have wrought as much upon the mind of Pilate as it did on Herod's; and have raised a suspicion in Pilate as prejudicial to our Saviour's innocence as Herod's was to the children born there. His pretending to be born at Bethlehem, as it was liable to be explained by the Jews, could not have failed to have met with a sinister interpretation in the Roman governor, and have rendered Jesus suspected of some criminal design against the government. And hence we see, that when Pilate asked

him, "Whence art thou? Jesus gave him no answer."

99. Whether our Saviour had not an eye to this straitness, this narrow room that was left to his conduct, between the new converts and the captious Jews, when he says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and *πῶς συνίχομαι*, how am I straitened till it be accomplished," I leave to be considered. "I am come to send fire on the earth," says our Saviour; "and what if it be already kindled?" that is, there begin already to be divisions about me,* and I have not the freedom, the latitude, to declare myself openly to be the Messiah; though I am he, that must not be spoken out till after my death. My way to my throne is closely hedged in on every side, and much straitened, within which I must keep, till it bring me to my cross, in its due time and manner, so that it do not cut short the time, nor cross the end of my ministry.

100. And therefore to keep up this inoffensive character, and not to let it come within the reach of accident or calumny, he withdrew with his apostles out of the town every evening, and kept himself retired out of the way. "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple, and every night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives;" that he might avoid all concourse to him in the night, and give no occasion of disturbance or suspicion of himself in that great conflux of the whole nation of the Jews, now assembled in Jerusalem at the pass-over.

101. But to return to his preaching in the temple. He bids them "to believe in the light whilst they have it:"† and he tells them, "I am the light come into the world, that every one who believes in me should not remain in darkness." Which believing in him, was the believing him to be the Messiah, as I have elsewhere showed. The next day, he rebukes them for not having believed John the Baptist, who had testified that he was the Messiah: and then, in a parable, declares himself to be the Son of God, whom they should destroy; and that for it God would take away the kingdom of the Messiah from them, and give it to the Gentiles.‡ That they understood him thus is plain from Luke xx. 16: "And when they heard it, they said, God forbid;" and verse 19, "For they knew that he had spoken this parable against them."

102. Much to the same purpose was his next parable, concerning the kingdom of heaven, Matt. xxii., that the Jews not accepting of the kingdom of the Messiah, to whom it was first offered, others should be brought in. The Scribes and Pharisees and chief priests, not able to bear the declaration he made of himself to be the Messiah, (by his discourses and miracles before them, *ἐμφοδεν αὐτῶν*, John xii. 37, which he had never done before,) impatient of his preaching and miracles, and being not able otherwise to stop the increase of his followers, (for, "said the Pharisees among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him." So that the "chief priests, and the Scribes, and the chief of the

* Vide John vii. 12, 43, and ix. 16, and x. 19.

† John xii. 36.

‡ Matt. xxi.

people,) sought to destroy him," the first day of his entrance into Jerusalem. The next day, again they were intent upon the same thing. And he taught in the temple; "and the Scribes and the chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him; for they feared him, because all the people were astonished at his doctrine."

103. The next day but one, upon his telling them the kingdom of the Messiah should be taken from them, "the chief priests and Scribes sought to lay hands on him the same hour; and they feared the people," Luke xx. If they had so great a desire to lay hold on him, why did they not?—They were the chief priests and the rulers, the men of power. The reason St. Luke plainly tells us in the next verse: "And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him into the power and authority of the governor." They wanted matter of accusation against him to the power they were under: that they watched for, and that they would have been glad of, if they could have entangled him in his talk, as St. Matthew expresses it.* If they could have laid hold on any word that had dropped from him, that might have rendered him guilty or suspected to the Roman governor, that would have served their turn, to have laid hold upon him, with hopes to destroy him: for their power not answering their malice, they could not put him to death by their own authority, without the permission and assistance of the governor, as they confess, John xviii. 31: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." This made them so earnest for a declaration in direct words from his own mouth, that he was the Messiah. It was not that they would more have believed in him for such a declaration of himself, than they did for his miracles, or other ways of making himself known, which it appears they understood well enough; but they wanted plain direct words, such as might support an accusation, and be of weight before an heathen judge. This was the reason why they pressed him to speak out: "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou be the Messiah, tell us plainly,"† *παρρησια*; that is, in direct words; for that St. John uses it in that sense, we may see chap. xi. 11—14: "Jesus saith to them, Lazarus sleepeth." His disciples said, "If he sleeps, he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death; but they thought he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus to them plainly, *παρρησια*, Lazarus is dead." Here we see what is meant by *παρρησια*, plain direct words, such as express the thing without a figure; and so they would have had Jesus pronounce himself to be the Messiah. And the same thing they press again, Matt. xvi. the high-priest adjuring him by the living God, to tell them whether he were the Messiah, the Son of God, as we shall have occasion to take notice by-and-by.

104. This we may observe in the whole management of their design against his life. It turned upon this; that they wanted and wished for a declaration from him, in direct words, that he was

the Messiah; something from his own mouth, that might offend the Roman power, and render him criminal to Pilate. "They asked him, saying, master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly; neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Cæsar, or no?" By this captious question they hoped to catch him, which way soever he answered; for if he had said, they ought to pay tribute to Cæsar, it would be plain he allowed their subjection to the Romans, and so in effect disowned himself to be their king and deliverer; whereby he would have contradicted what his carriage and doctrine seemed to aim at, the opinion that was spread amongst the people, that he was the Messiah. This would have quashed the hopes, and destroyed the faith of those who believed on him, and have turned the ears and hearts of the people from him. If, on the other side, he answered No, it is not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, they had had out of his own mouth wherewithal to condemn him before Pontius Pilate. But St. Luke tells us, "He perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?" that is, why do ye lay snares for me? "Ye hypocrites, show me the tribute-money." So it is, Matt. xxii. 19. "Whose image and inscription has it? They said, Cæsar's. He said unto them, Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." By the wisdom and caution of which unexpected answer, he defeated their whole design. "And they could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace," Luke xx. 26: "and leaving him, they departed," Matt. xxii. 22.

105. He having, by this reply, (and what he answered to the Sadducees concerning the resurrection, and to the lawyer about the first commandment, Mark xii.,) answered so little to their satisfaction or advantage, they durst ask him no more questions any of them. And now their mouths being stopped, he himself begins to question them about the Messiah, asking the Pharisees, Matt. xxii. "What think ye of the Messiah, whose Son is he? They say unto him the son of David:" wherein, though they answered right, yet he shows them, in the following words, that however they pretended to be studiers and teachers of the law, yet they understood not clearly the Scriptures concerning the Messiah; and thereupon he sharply rebukes their hypocrisy, vanity, pride, malice, covetousness, and ignorance—and particularly tells them, "Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, nor suffer ye them that are entering, to go in." Whereby he plainly declares to them, that the Messiah was come, and his kingdom began; but that they refused to believe in him themselves, and did all they could to hinder others from believing in him, as is manifest throughout the New Testament; the history whereof sufficiently explains what is meant here by the "kingdom of heaven," which the Scribes and Pharisees would neither go into themselves, nor suffer others to enter into. And they could not choose but understand him, though he named not himself in the case.

106. Provoked anew by his rebukes, they got

* Chap. xxii.

† John x.

presently to council : "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the Scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high-priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtily, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people. For they feared the people," says St. Luke, chap. xxii. Having in the night got Jesus into their hands, by the treachery of Judas, they presently led him away, bound, to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high-priest, who probably having examined him, and getting nothing out of him for his purpose, sends him away to Caiaphas, where the chief priests, the Scribes, and the elders were assembled, John xviii. 19, 20 : "The high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world ; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort ; and in secret have I said nothing." A proof that he had not in private to his disciples declared himself in express words to be the Messiah, the Prince. But he goes on. "Why askest thou me ?" Ask Judas, who has been always with me. "Ask them who heard me what I have said unto them ; behold, they know what I said." Our Saviour, we see, here warily declines, for the reasons above mentioned, all discourse of his doctrine. 'The sanhedrim, Matt. xxvi. "sought false witness against him ;" but when they found none that were sufficient, or came up to the point they desired, which was to have something against him to take away his life ; (for so I think the words *καὶ ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἦν* mean, Mark xiv. 56, 59 :) they try again what they can get out of him himself, concerning his being the Messiah ; which if he owned in express words, they thought they should have enough against him at the tribunal of the Roman governor, to make him *læsæ majestatis reum*, and so to take away his life. They therefore say to him, Luke xxii. 67 : "If thou be the Messiah, tell us : " nay, as St. Matthew hath it, the high-priest adjures him by the living God to tell them whether he were the Messiah. To which our Saviour replies : "If I tell you, ye will not believe ; and if I ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go." If I tell you, and prove to you, by the testimony given of me from heaven, and by the works that I have done among you, you will not believe in me, that I am the Messiah : or, if I should ask you where the Messiah is to be born, and what state he should come in, how he should appear, and other things that you think in me not reconcilable with the Messiah ; you will not answer me, and let me go, as one that has no pretence to be the Messiah, and you are not afraid should be received for such. But yet I tell you, "hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God," verse 70. Then said they all, "Art thou then the Son of God ? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am." By which discourse with them, related at large here by St. Luke, it is plain, that the answer of our Saviour, set down by St. Matthew, chap. xxvi. 64, in these words, "Thou hast said ;" and by St. Mark, chap. xvi. 62, in these, "I am ;" is an answer only to this question, "Art thou then the Son of God ?" and not to that other, "Art thou the Messiah ?" which preceded, and he had answered to before ;

though Matthew and Mark, contracting the story, set them down together, as if making but one question, omitting all the intervening discourse ; whereas it is plain, out of St. Luke, that they were two distinct questions, to which Jesus gave two distinct answers : in the first whereof he, according to his usual caution, declined saying in plain express words that he was the Messiah ; though in the latter he owned himself to be the Son of God : which, though they, being Jews understood to signify the Messiah, yet he knew could be no legal or weighty accusation against him before a heathen ; and so it proved : for upon his answering to their question, "Art thou then the Son of God ? Ye say that I am ;" they cry out, "What need we any further witnesses ? For we ourselves have heard out of his own mouth : " and so thinking they had enough against him, they hurry him away to Pilate. Pilate asking them, "What accusation bring you against this man ? they answered and said, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Then said Pilate unto them, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law."* But this would not serve their turn, who aimed at his life, and would be satisfied with nothing else. The Jews, therefore, said unto him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." And this was also, "that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die." Pursuing, therefore, their design, of making him appear to Pontius Pilate guilty of treason against Cæsar, "they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar ; saying, that he himself is the Messiah, the king : " all which were inferences of theirs from his saying, he was the "Son of God ;" which Pontius Pilate finding, (for it is consonant that he examined them to the precise words he had said,) their accusation had no weight with him. However, the name of king being suggested against Jesus, he thought himself concerned to search it to the bottom. "Then Pilate entered again into the judgment-hall, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews ? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me ? Pilate answered, am I a Jew ? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me : what hast thou done ? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world : if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews ? But my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate, therefore, said unto him, Art thou a king then ? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king : for this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth : every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

107. In this dialogue between our Saviour and Pilate we may observe, 1. That being asked, whether he were the king of the Jews, he answers so, that though he deny it not, yet he avoided giving the least umbrage, that he had any design upon the government ; for, though he allows himself to be a king, yet, to obviate any suspicion, he

* John xviii.

tells Pilate, "his kingdom is not of this world;" and evidences it by this, that if he had pretended to any title to that country, his followers, which were not a few, and were forward enough to believe him their king, would have fought for him, if he had had a mind to set himself up by force, or his kingdom were so to be erected. "But my kingdom," says he, "is not from hence;" is not of this fashion, or of this place. 2. Pilate, being by his words and circumstances satisfied that he laid no claim to his province, or meant any disturbance of the government, was yet a little surprised to hear a man, in that poor garb, without retinue, or so much as a servant or a friend, own himself to be a king; and therefore asks him, with some kind of wonder, "Art thou a king, then?" 3. That our Saviour declares, that his great business into the world was, to testify and make good this great truth, that he was a king; that is, in other words, that he was the Messiah. 4. That whoever were followers of the truth, and got into the way of truth and happiness, received this doctrine concerning him, viz. that he was Messiah, their king.

108. Pilate being thus satisfied that he neither meant, nor could there arise any harm from his pretence, whatever it was, to be a king, tells the Jews, "I find no fault in this man:" but the Jews were the more fierce, saying, "He stirreth up the people to sedition, by his preaching through all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place:" and then Pilate, learning that he was of Galilee, Herod's jurisdiction, sent him to Herod; to whom also "the chief priests and Scribes vehemently accused him." Herod finding all their accusations either false or frivolous, thought our Saviour a bare object of contempt; and so turning him only into ridicule, sent him back to Pilate; who calling unto him the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, said unto them, "Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people; and behold, I have examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching these things whereof ye accuse him; no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and so nothing worthy of death is done by him:" and therefore he would have released him; "for he knew the chief priests had delivered him through envy." And when they demanded Barabbas to be released; but as for Jesus, cried, Crucify him, "Pilate said unto them the third time, Why? What evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go."

109. We may observe in all this whole prosecution of the Jews, that they would fain have got it out of Jesus's own mouth, in express words, that he was the Messiah; which not being able to do with all their art and endeavor, all the rest that they could allege against him not amounting to a proof before Pilate, that he claimed to be king of the Jews, or that he had caused or done any thing towards a mutiny or insurrection among the people, (for upon these two, as we see, their whole charge turned,) Pilate again and again pronounced him innocent; for so he did a fourth and a fifth time, bringing him out to them after he had whipped him. And after all, "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his

hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man; see you to it."—Which gives us a clear reason of the cautious and wary conduct of our Saviour, in not declaring himself, in the whole course of his ministry, so much as to his disciples, much less to the multitude or the rulers of the Jews, in express words, to be the Messiah, the king; and why he kept himself always in prophetic or parabolical terms, (he and his disciples preaching only the kingdom of God, that is, of the Messiah, to be come,) and left to his miracles to declare who he was; though this was the truth which he came into the world, as he says himself, to testify, and which his disciples were to believe.

110. When Pilate, satisfied of his innocence, would have released him; and the Jews persisted to cry out, "Crucify him, crucify him, Pilate says to them, take ye him yourselves, and crucify him; for I do not find any fault in him." The Jews then, since they could not make him a state-criminal, by alleging his saying that he was the Son of God; say, by their law, it was a capital crime. The Jews answered to Pilate, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God;" that is, because, by saying he is the Son of God, he has made himself the Messiah, the prophet which was to come: for we find no other law but that against false prophets, Deut. xviii. 20, whereby "making himself the Son of God" deserved death. After this Pilate was the more desirous to release him, "But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar."—Here we see the stress of their charge against Jesus, whereby they hoped to take away his life, viz. that he "made himself king." We see also upon what they grounded this accusation, viz., because he had owned himself to be "the Son of God:" for he had, in their hearing, never made or professed himself to be a king. We see here likewise the reason why they were so desirous to draw, from his own mouth, a confession, in express words, that he was the Messiah, viz., that they might have what might be a clear proof that he did so. And last of all, we see the reason why, though in expressions which they understood, he owned himself to them to be the Messiah, yet he avoided declaring it to them in such words as might look criminal at Pilate's tribunal. He owned himself to be the Messiah plainly to the understanding of the Jews; but in ways that could not, to the understanding of Pilate, make it appear that he had laid claim to the kingdom of Judea, or went about to make himself king of that country. But whether his saying that he was "the Son of God," was criminal by their law, that Pilate troubled not himself about.

111. He that considers what Tacitus, Suetonius, Seneca, de Benef. lib. iii. c. 26, say of Tiberius and his reign, will find how necessary it was for our Saviour, if he would not die as a criminal and a traitor, to take great heed to his words and actions, that he did or said not any thing that might be offensive, or give the least umbrage to the Roman government. It behoved an innocent man, who was taken notice of for something extraordinary in him, to be very wary, under a jealous and

cruel prince, who encouraged informations, and filled his reign with executions for treason; under whom words spoken innocently, or in jest, if they could be misconstrued, were made treason, and prosecuted with a rigor that made it always the same thing to be accused and condemned. And therefore we see, that when the Jews told Pilate, that he should not be a friend to Cæsar if he let Jesus go, (for that whoever made himself king, was a rebel against Cæsar,) he asks them no more whether they would take Barabbas, and spare Jesus, but (though against his conscience) gives him up to death, to secure his own head.

112. One thing more there is, that gives us light into this wise* and necessarily cautious management of himself, which manifestly agrees with it, and makes a part of it; and that is, the choice of his apostles, exactly suited to the design and foresight of the necessity of keeping the declaration of the kingdom of the Messiah, which was now expected, within certain general terms during his ministry: it was not fit to open himself too plainly or forwardly to the heady Jews, that he himself was the Messiah; that was to be left to be found out by the observation of those who would attend to the purity of his life, the testimony of his miracles, and the conformity of all with the predictions concerning him; by these marks, those he lived amongst were to find it out, without an express promulgation that he was the Messiah, till after his death: His kingdom was to be opened to them by degrees, as well to prepare them to receive it, as to enable him to be long enough amongst them, to perform what was the work of the Messiah to be done, and fulfil all those several parts of what was foretold of him in the Old Testament, and we see applied to him in the New.

113. The Jews had no other thoughts of their Messiah, but of a mighty temporal prince, that should raise their nation into a higher degree of power, dominion, and prosperity than ever it had enjoyed. They were filled with the expectation of a glorious earthly kingdom. It was not therefore for a poor man, the son of a carpenter, and (as they thought) born in Galilee, to pretend to it. None of the Jews, no not his disciples, could have borne this, if he had expressly avowed this at first, and began his preaching, and the opening of his kingdom this way; especially if he had added to it, that in a year or two he should die an ignominious death upon the cross. They are therefore prepared for the truth by degrees. First, John the Baptist tells them, "The kingdom of God (a name by which the Jews called the kingdom of the Messiah) is at hand." Then our Saviour comes,

* On questions of this kind there is always some inconsistency in the language of the best of men. Considering Christ to be the Messiah it is exceedingly unnecessary, to say no more of it, to speak of the wisdom of his conduct; for, who can doubt it? To be the Christ, the Sent, the Anointed of God, implies wisdom, and goodness, and every excellent attribute; and we seem as if desirous to prove to ourselves that he was the Christ, when we praise him as we would a Socrates, a Plato, or a Milton. There is a want of wisdom in attempting to assign the *why* and the *wherefore* in speaking of divine things. Whatever God does, we may, for that very reason, be satisfied is wisest and best; but why it should be so, we neither know nor can know.—Ed.

and he tells them of the kingdom of God, sometimes that it is at hand, and upon some occasions, that it is come; but says, in his public preaching, little or nothing of himself. Then come the apostles and evangelists after his death, and they in express words teach what his birth, life, and doctrine had done before, and had prepared the well-disposed to receive; viz. that Jesus is the Messiah.

114. To this design and method of publishing the gospel, was the choice of the apostles exactly adjusted; a company of poor, ignorant, illiterate men, who, as Christ himself tells us, were not of the wise and prudent men of the world; they were in that respect but mere children. These, convinced by the miracles they saw him daily do, and the unblamable life he led, might be disposed to believe him to be the Messiah; and though they with others expected a temporal kingdom on earth, might yet rest satisfied in the truth of their master (who had honored them with being near his person) that it would come, without being too inquisitive after the time, manner, or seat of his kingdom; as men of letters,* more studied in their rabbins, or men of business, more versed in the world, would have been forward to have been.—Men great or wise in knowledge or ways of the world, would hardly have been kept from prying more narrowly into his design and conduct, or from questioning him about the ways and measures he would take for ascending the throne; and what means were to be used towards it, and when they should in earnest set about it. Able men, of higher births or thoughts,† would hardly have been hindered from whispering, at least to their friends and relations, that their Master was the Messiah; and that though he concealed himself to a fit opportunity, and till things were ripe for it, yet they should ere long see him break out

* Had God disposed things differently, and made choice of men of letters, I hope our piety would have taught us sufficient meekness to discover equal wisdom in the selection. For what, after all, is the knowledge of the most profound philosopher, when he comes to consider the counsels and actions of the Almighty? In these attempts to explain the motives of our Saviour, further than they appear in Scripture,—which, however, is common to Locke with the most distinguished divines,—I discover a want of that humility which should be the guiding spirit in all religious investigations.—Ed.

† This appears but very poor reasoning to me. Men of high thoughts, which not always accompany high birth, would doubtless have learned of their Divine Master the necessity of obedience. If low thoughts mean, as I suppose they do, confused, obscure, and incorrect thoughts, "high thoughts" must be such as approach nearer to truth and virtue; and the possessor of such thoughts would be so much the further from any unwise action. But the truth appears to be, that our Saviour chose his apostles because their thoughts were high; that is, pure, and nearer heaven, than those occupying the heads of ordinary men of business, or even of statesmen.—Like the patriarch of old, they were, perhaps, accustomed to meditate in the fields at even-tide; and He who searches all hearts knew to what heights their contemplations soared. Poor they were—but the absence of gold and silver makes a man neither high nor low; but the thoughts upon which his soul habitually feeds.—Ed.

of his obscurity, cast off the cloud, and declare himself, as he was, king of Israel. But the ignorance and lowness of these poor men made them of another temper. They went along in an implicit trust on him, punctually keeping to his commands, and not exceeding his commission. When he sent them to preach the gospel, he bade them preach the "kingdom of God" to be at hand; and that they did, without being more particular than he had ordered, or mixing their own prudence with his commands, to promote the kingdom of the Messiah. They preached it without giving out, or so much as intimating that their master was he; which men of another condition, and an higher education, would scarce have forborne to have done. When he asked them who they thought him to be, and Peter answered, "The Messiah, the Son of God," he plainly shows, by the following words, that he himself had not told them so; and at the same time, forbids them to tell this their opinion of him to any body. How obedient they were to him in this, we may not only conclude from the silence of the evangelists concerning any such thing published by them any where before his death, but from the exact obedience three of them paid to a like command of his. He takes Peter, James, and John into a mountain, and there Moses and Elias coming to him, he is transfigured before them: he charges them, saying, "See that ye tell no man what ye have seen, till the Son of man shall be risen from the dead." And St. Luke tells us, what punctual observers they were of his orders in this case: "They kept it close, and told no man, in those days, any of those things which they had seen."*

115. Whether twelve other men, of quicker parts, and of a station or breeding which might have given them any opinion of themselves or their own abilities, would have been so easily kept from meddling beyond just what was prescribed them, in a matter they had so much interest in; and have said nothing of what they might in human prudence have thought would have contributed to their master's reputation, and made way for his advancement to his kingdom, I leave to be considered. And it may suggest matter of meditation, whether St. Paul was not, for this reason, by his learning, parts, and warmer temper, better fitted for an apostle after, than during our Saviour's ministry; and therefore, though a chosen vessel, was not by the divine wisdom called till after Christ's resurrection. I offer this only as a subject of magnifying the admirable contrivance of the divine wisdom, in the whole work of our redemption, as far as we are able to trace it by the footsteps which God hath made visible to human reason. For though it be as easy to omnipotent Power to do all things by an immediate overruling will, and so to make any instruments work, even contrary to their natures, in subserviency to his ends; yet his wisdom is not usually at the expense of miracles, (if I may so say,) but only in cases that require them, for the evidencing of some relation or mission to be from him. He does constantly (unless where the confirmation of some truth requires it otherwise) bring about his purposes by means operating according to their na-

tures. If it were not so, the course and evidence of things would be confounded; miracles would lose their name and force, and there could be no distinction between natural and supernatural.

116. There had been no room left to see and admire the wisdom, as well as innocence, of our Saviour, if he had rashly every where exposed himself to the fury of the Jews, and had always been preserved by a miraculous suspension of their malice, or a miraculous rescuing him out of their hands. It was enough for him once to escape from the men of Nazareth, who were going to throw him down a precipice, for him never to preach to them again. Our Saviour had multitudes that followed him for the loaves, who barely seeing the miracles that he did, would have made him king. If to the miracles he did, he had openly added, in express words, that he was the Messiah, and the king they expected to deliver them, he would have had more followers, and warmer in the cause, and readier to set him up at the head of a tumult. These, indeed, God, by a miraculous influence, might have hindered from any such attempt; but then posterity could not have believed that the nation of the Jews did at that time expect the Messiah, their king and deliverer, or that Jesus, who declared himself to be that king deliverer, showed any miracles amongst them, to convince them of it; or did any thing worthy to make him be credited or received. If he had gone about preaching to the multitude which he drew after him, that he was the "Messiah, the king of Israel," and this had been evidenced to Pilate, God could indeed, by a supernatural influence upon his mind, have made Pilate pronounce him innocent, and not condemn him as a malefactor, who had openly, for three years together, preached sedition to the people, and endeavored to persuade them that he was the "Messiah, their king," of the blood royal of David come to deliver them. But then I ask, whether posterity would not either have suspected the story, or that some art had been used to gain that testimony from Pilate? Because he could not (for nothing) have been so favorable to Jesus, as to be willing to release so turbulent and seditious a man, to declare him innocent, and to cast the blame and guilt of his death, as unjust, upon the envy of the Jews.

117. But now the malice of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees; the headiness of the mob, animated with hopes, and raised with miracles: Judas's treachery, and Pilate's care of his government, and of the peace of his province, all working naturally as they should; Jesus, by the admirable wariness of his carriage, and an extraordinary wisdom visible in his whole conduct, weathers all these difficulties, does the work he comes for, uninterruptedly goes about preaching his full appointed time, sufficiently manifests himself to be the Messiah in all the particulars the Scriptures had foretold of him; and when his hour is come, suffers death; but is acknowledged, both by Judas that betrayed and Pilate that condemned him, to die innocent. For, to use his own words, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Messiah to suffer." And of his whole conduct we have a reason and clear resolution in those words to St. Peter, Matt. xxvi. "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me

* Luke ix. 36.

more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, and thus it must be?"

118. Having this clue to guide us, let us now observe how our Saviour's preaching and conduct comported with it in the last scene of his life. How cautious he had been in the former part of his ministry, we have already observed. We never find him to use the name of the Messiah but once, till he now came to Jerusalem, this last passover. Before this, his preaching and miracles were less at Jerusalem (where he used to make but very short stays) than any where else; but now he comes six days before the feast, and is every day in the temple teaching; and there publicly heals the blind and the lame, in the presence of the Scribes, Pharisees, and chief priests. The time of his ministry drawing to an end, and his hour coming, he cared not how much the chief priests, elders, rulers, and the sanhedrim were provoked against him by his doctrine and miracles; he was as open and bold in his preaching, and doing the works of the Messiah now, at Jerusalem, and in the sight of the rulers and of all the people, as he had been before cautious and reserved there, and careful to be little taken notice of in that place, and not to come in their way more than needs. All that he now took care of was, not what they should think of him, or design against him, (for he knew they would seize him,) but to say or do nothing that might be a just matter of accusation against him, or render him criminal to the governor. But as for the grandes of the Jewish nation, he spares them not, but sharply now reprehends their miscarriages publicly in the temple, where he calls them, more than once, hypocrites, as is to be seen Matt. xxiii.; and concludes all with no softer a compellation than "serpents" and "generation of vipers."

119. After this severe reproof of the Scribes and Pharisees, being retired with his disciples into the Mount of Olives, over against the temple, and there foretelling the destruction of it, his disciples ask him, Matt. xxiv. "When it should be, and what should be the signs of his coming?" He says to them, "Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name;" that is, taking on them the name and dignity of the Messiah, which is only mine; saying, "I am the Messiah, and shall deceive many." But be not you by them misled, nor by persecution driven away from this fundamental truth—that I am the Messiah; "for many shall be scandalized," and apostatize, "but he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved:" and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world; that is, the good news of me, the Messiah, and my kingdom, shall be spread through the world. This was the great and only point of belief they were warned to stick to; and this is inculcated again, ver. 23—26, and Mark xiii. 21—23, with this emphatical application to them in both these evangelists: "Behold, I have told you beforehand;" remember ye are forewarned.

120. This was in his answer to the apostles' inquiry concerning his "coming, and the end of the world;" for so we translate *τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος*; we must understand the disciples here to put their question according to the notion and way of speaking of the Jews. For they had two worlds, as we translate it, *ὁ νῦν αἰὼν* κ. *ὁ μέλλων αἰὼν*; the "present

world," and the "world to come." The kingdom of God, as they called it, or the time of the Messiah, they called *ὁ μέλλων αἰὼν*, "the world to come," which they believed was to put an end to "this world:" and that then the just should be raised from the dead to enjoy in that new world, a happy eternity with those of the Jewish nation who should be then living.

121. These two things, viz. the visible and powerful appearance of his kingdom, and the end of the world, being confounded in the apostles' question, our Saviour does not separate them, nor distinctly reply to them apart; but leaving the inquirers in the common opinion, answers at once concerning his coming to take vengeance of the Jewish nation, and put an end to their church, worship, and commonwealth; which was their *οὗτος αἰὼν*, present world, which they counted should last till the Messiah came: and so it did, and then had an end put to it. And to this he joins his last coming to judgment, in the glory of his Father, to put a final end to this world, and all the dispensation belonging to the posterity of Adam upon earth. This joining them together made his answer obscure, and hard to be understood by them then; nor was it safe for him to speak plainer of his kingdom, and the destruction of Jerusalem, unless he had a mind to be accused for having designs against the government. For Judas was amongst them; and whether no other but his apostles were comprehended under the name of his disciples, who were with him at this time, one cannot determine. Our Saviour therefore speaks of his kingdom in no other style but that which he had all along hitherto used, viz. "The kingdom of God:"—"When you see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." And continuing on his discourse with them, he has the same expression, Matt. xxv. 1: "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be like unto ten virgins." At the end of the following parable of the talents, he adds, verse 31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left. Then shall the King say," &c. Here he describes to his disciples the appearance of his kingdom, wherein he will show himself a King in glory upon his throne; but this in such a way, and so remote, and so unintelligible to a heathen magistrate, that if it had been alleged against him, it would have seemed rather the dream of a crazy brain, than the contrivance of an ambitious or dangerous man designing against the government: the way of expressing what he meant, being in the prophetic style; which is seldom so plain as to be understood, till accomplished. It is plain that his disciples themselves comprehended not what kingdom he here spoke of, from their question to him after his resurrection, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?"

122. Having finished these discourses, he takes order for the passover, and eats it with his disciples; and at supper tells them, that one of them should betray him; and adds, "I tell it you now, before it come, that when it is come to pass, you may know that I am." He does not say out, the

Messiah: Judas should not have that to say against him if he would; though that be the sense in which he uses this expression, *ἐγὼ εἰμι*, more than once. And that this is the meaning of it is clear from Mark xii. 6; Luke xxi. 8; in both which evangelists the words are, "For many shall come in my name, saying," *ἐγὼ εἰμι*, "I am;" the meaning whereof we shall find explained in the parallel place of St. Matthew, chapter xxiv. 5,— "For many shall come in my name, saying," *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός*, "I am the Messiah." Here in this place of John xiii. Jesus foretells what should happen to him; viz. that he should be betrayed by Judas: adding this prediction to the many other particulars of his death and suffering, which he had at other times foretold to them. And here he tells them the reason of these his predictions, viz. that afterwards they might be a confirmation to their faith. And what was it that he would have them believe, and be confirmed in the belief of? Nothing but this, *ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι*, that he was the Messiah. The same reason he gives, John xiii. 28: "You have heard, how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you: and now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe."

123. When Judas had left them, and was gone out he talks a little freer to them of his glory and of his kingdom, than ever he had done before.— For now he speaks plainly of himself, and of his kingdom, John xiii. "Therefore, when he (Judas) was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is also glorified in him. And if God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."— And Luke xxii. "And I will appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink with me at my table in my kingdom." Though he has every where all along through his ministry preached the "gospel of the kingdom," and nothing else but that and repentance, and the duties of a good life; yet it has been always "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven:" and I do not remember that any where, till now, he uses any such expression, as my kingdom. But here now he speaks in the first person, "I will appoint you a kingdom;" and "in my kingdom;" and this we see is only to the eleven, now Judas was gone from them.

124. With these eleven, whom he was now just leaving, he has a long discourse to comfort them for their loss of him, and to prepare them for the persecution of the world, and to exhort them to keep his commandments, and to love one another. And here one may expect all the articles of faith should be laid down plainly, if any thing else were required of them to believe, but what he had taught them, and they believed already; viz.— "That he was the Messiah," John xiv. 1. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," verse 29. "I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye may believe." It is believing on him, without any thing else, John xvi. 31:—"Jesus answered them,—Do you now believe?" This was in answer to their professing, verse 30, "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou comest forth from God." John xvii. 20: "Neither pray I for these

alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." All that is spoke of "believing," in this his last sermon to them, is only "believing on him," or believing that "he came from God;" which was no other than believing him to be the Messiah.

125. Indeed, John xiv., our Saviour tells Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;" and adds,— "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works." Which being in answer to Philip's words, verse 9, "Show us the Father," seem to import thus much — "No man hath seen God at any time," he is known only by his works. And that he is my Father, and I the Son of God,—that is, the Messiah,—you may know by the works I have done; which it is impossible I could do of myself, but by the union I have with God my Father. For that by being "in God" and "God in him," he signifies such an union with God, that God operates in him, and by him, appears not only by the words above cited, out of verse 10: (which can scarce otherwise be made coherent sense,) but also from the same phrase used again by our Saviour presently after, verse 20: "At that day," viz. after his resurrection, when they should see him again, "ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you;" that is, by the works I shall enable you to do, through a power I have received from the Father: which whoever sees me do, must acknowledge the Father to be in me; and whoever sees you do, must acknowledge me to be in you. And therefore he says, verse 12, "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he also do, because I go unto my Father." Though I go away, yet I shall be in you who believe in me; and ye shall be enabled to do miracles also for the carrying on of my kingdom, as I have done; that it may be manifested to others, that you are sent by me, as I have evidenced to you that I am sent by the Father; and hence it is that he says, in the immediate preceding verse 11, "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; if not, believe me for the sake of the works themselves." Let the works that I have done convince you that I am sent by the Father, that he is with me, and that I do nothing but by his will, and by virtue of the union I have with him; and that, consequently, I am the Messiah, who am anointed, sanctified, and separated by the Father to the work for which he hath sent me.

126. To confirm them in this faith, and to enable them to do such works as he had done, he promises them the Holy Ghost, John xiv.: "These things I have said unto you, being yet present with you;" but when I am gone, "the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete," (which may signify monitor as well as comforter, or advocate,) "which the Father shall send you in my name, he shall show you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things which I have said." So that, considering all that I have said, and laying it together, and comparing it with what you shall see come to pass, you may be more abundantly assured that I am the Messiah, and fully comprehend that I have done and suffered all things foretold of the Messiah, and that were

to be accomplished and fulfilled by him, according to the Scriptures. But be not filled with grief that I leave you: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Paraclete will not come unto you." One reason why, if he went not away, the Holy Ghost could not come, we may gather from what has been observed concerning the prudent and wary carriage of our Saviour all through his ministry, that he might not incur death with the least suspicion of a malefactor; and therefore, though his disciples believed him to be the Messiah, yet they neither understood it so well, nor were so well confirmed in the belief of it, as after that, he being crucified and risen again, they had received the Holy Ghost; and with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a fuller and clearer evidence and knowledge that he was the Messiah. They then were enlightened to see how his kingdom was such as the Scriptures foretold; though not such as they, till then, had expected. And now this knowledge and assurance received from the Holy Ghost was of use to them after his resurrection; when they could now boldly go about, and openly preach, as they did, that Jesus was the Messiah, confirming that doctrine by the miracles which the Holy Ghost empowered them to do; but till he was dead and gone, they could not do this. Their going about openly preaching, as they did after his resurrection, that Jesus was the Messiah, and doing miracles every where to make it good, would not have consisted with that character of humility, peace, and innocence, which the Messiah was to sustain, if they had done it before his crucifixion; for this would have drawn upon him the condemnation of a malefactor, either as a stirrer of sedition against the public peace, or as a pretender to the kingdom of Israel. And hence we see, that they who before his death preached only "the gospel of the kingdom," that "the kingdom of God was at hand;" as soon as they had received the Holy Ghost, after his resurrection, changed their style, and every where, in express words, declare, that Jesus is the Messiah, that king which was to come. This the following words here, in St. John, xvi. 8—14, confirm; where he goes on to tell them: "And when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, because they believed not on me." Your preaching, then, accompanied with miracles, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, shall be a conviction to the world that the Jews sinned in not believing me to be the Messiah. "Of righteousness," or justice: "Because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." By the same preaching and miracles you shall confirm the doctrine of my ascension; and thereby convince the world that I was that just one, who am therefore ascended to the Father into heaven, where no unjust person shall enter. "Of judgment: because the prince of this world is judged;" and by the same assistance of the Holy Ghost, ye shall convince the world that the devil is judged or condemned, by your casting of him out, and destroying his kingdom, and his worship, wherever you preach. Our Saviour adds, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now." They were yet so full of a temporal kingdom, that they could not bear the discovery of what kind of kingdom his was, nor what a king he was to be; and therefore he leaves them to the coming of the Holy Ghost,

for a further and fuller discovery of himself, and the kingdom of the Messiah, for fear they should be scandalized in him, and give up the hopes they had now in him, and forsake him. This he tells them, verse 1, of this sixteenth chapter: "These things I have said unto you, that you may not be scandalized." The last thing he had told them before his saying this to them, we find in the last verses of the precedent chapter: "When the Paraclete is come, the Spirit of truth, he shall witness concerning me." He shall show you who I am, and witness it to the world; and then "ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." He shall call to your mind what I have said and done, that ye may understand it, and know, and bear witness concerning me. And again here, John xvi., after he had told them they could not bear what he had more to say, he adds, verse 13: "Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; and he will show you things to come: he shall glorify me." By the Spirit, when he comes, ye shall be fully instructed concerning me; and though ye cannot yet, from what I have said to you, clearly comprehend my kingdom and glory, yet he shall make it known to you wherein it consists: and though I am now in a mean state, and ready to be given up to contempt, torment, and death, so that ye know not what to think of it; yet the Spirit, when he comes, "shall glorify me," and fully satisfy you of my power and kingdom; and that I sit on the right hand of God, to order all things for the good and increase of it, till I come again at the last day in the fulness of glory.

127. Accordingly, the apostles had a full and clear sight and persuasion of this, after they had received the Holy Ghost; and they preached it every where boldly and openly, without the least remainder of doubt or uncertainty. But that even so late as this, they understood not his death and resurrection, is evident from verses 17, 18. "Then said some of the disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us; a little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me; and because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, a little while? We know not what he saith." Upon which, he goes on to discourse to them of his death and resurrection, and of the power they should have of doing miracles. But all this he declares to them in a mystical and involved way of speaking; as he tells them himself, verse 25: "These things have I spoken to you in proverbs;" that is, in general, obscure, enigmatical, or figurative terms. (All which, as well as allusive apologies, the Jews called proverbs or parables.) Hitherto my declaring of myself to you hath been obscure, and with reserve; and I have not spoken of myself to you in plain and direct words, because ye could not bear it. A Messiah, and not a king, you could not understand; and a king living in poverty and persecution, and dying the death of a slave and malefactor upon a cross, you could not put together. And had I told you in plain words, that I was the Messiah, and given you a direct commission to preach to others, that I professedly owned myself to be the Messiah, you and they would have made a commotion, to have set me upon the throne

of my father David, and to fight for me ; that your Messiah, your king, in whom are your hopes of a kingdom, should not be delivered up into the hands of his enemies, to be put to death ; and of this, Peter will instantly give you a proof. But "the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in parables ; but I shall show unto you plainly of the Father." My death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, will speedily enlighten you, and then I shall make you know the will and design of the Father ; what a kingdom I am to have, and by what means, and to what end. And this the Father himself will show unto you ; "for he loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from the Father." Because ye have believed that I am the "Son of God, the Messiah ;" that he hath anointed and sent me ; though it hath not been yet fully discovered to you what kind of kingdom it shall be, nor by what means brought about. And then our Saviour, without being asked, explaining to them what he had said, and making them understand better, what before they stuck at, and complained secretly among themselves, that they understood not ; they thereupon declare, "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee." It is plain thou knowest men's thoughts and doubts before they ask. "By this we believe that thou comest forth from God. Jesus answered, Do ye now believe ?" Notwithstanding that you now believe that I came from God, and am the Messiah, sent by him ; "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered ;" and as it is, Matt. xxvi. 31, and "shall all be scandalized in me." What it is to be scandalized in him, we may see by what followed hereupon, if that which he says to St. Peter, Mark, xvi., did not sufficiently explain it.

128. This I have been the more particular in, that it may be seen, that in his last discourse to his disciples (where he opened himself more than he had hitherto done ; and where, if any thing more was required to make them believers, than what they already believed, we might have expected they should have heard of it) there were no new articles proposed to them, but what they believed before, viz. : that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, sent from the Father : though of his manner of proceeding, and his sudden leaving the world, and some few particulars, he made them understand something more than they did before. But as to the main design of the gospel, viz., that he had a kingdom, that he should be put to death, and rise again, and ascend into heaven to his Father, and come again in glory to judge the world, this he had told them ; and so had acquainted them with the great council of God, in sending him, the Messiah, and omitted nothing that was necessary to be known or believed in it. And so he tells them himself, John xv. 15 : "Henceforth I call ye not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord does : but I have called ye friends ; for all things I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you ;" though perhaps ye do not so fully comprehend them as you will shortly, when I am risen and ascended.

129. To conclude all, in his prayer, which shuts up this discourse, he tells the Father what he had made known to his apostles ; the result whereof

we have, John xvii. 8 : "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and they have believed that thou didst send me ;" which is in effect, that he was the Messiah promised and sent by God. And then he prays for them, and adds, verse 20, 21, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who believe on me through their word." What that word was through which others should believe in him, we have seen in the preaching of the apostles all through the history of the Acts, viz., this one great point, that Jesus was the Messiah. The apostles, he says, verse 25, "know that thou hast sent me ;" that is, are assured that I am the Messiah : and in verses 21 and 23, he prays, "that the world may believe (which in verse 23 is called knowing) that thou has sent me ;" so that what Christ would have believed by his disciples, we may see by this, his last prayer for them, when he was leaving the world, as well as by what he preached whilst he was in it. And as a testimony of this, one of his last actions, even when he was upon the cross, was to confirm this doctrine, by giving salvation to one of the thieves that was crucified with him, upon his declaration that he believed him to be the Messiah ; for so much the words of his request imported, when he said, "Remember me, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom." To which Jesus replied, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." An expression very remarkable : for as Adam, by sin, lost paradise ; that is, a state of happy immortality ; here the believing thief, through his faith in Jesus, the Messiah, is promised to be put in paradise, and so reinstated in a happy immortality.

130. Thus our Saviour ended his life. And what he did after his resurrection St. Luke tells us, Acts, i. 3, that he showed himself to the apostles "forty days, speaking things concerning the kingdom of God." This was what our Saviour preached in the whole course of his ministry, before his passion ; and no other mysteries of faith does he now discover to them after his resurrection. All he says is concerning the kingdom of God ; and what it was he said concerning that, we shall see presently, out of the other evangelists ; having first only taken notice, that when they now asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ?" he said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put into his own power : but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ; and ye shall be witnesses unto me unto the utmost parts of the earth." Their great business was to be witnesses to Jesus, of his life, death, resurrection and ascension ; which, put together, were undeniable proofs of his being the Messiah. This was what they were to preach, and what he said to them concerning the kingdom of God, as will appear by what is recorded of it in the other evangelists.

131. When, on the day of his resurrection, he appeared to the two going to Emmaus, they declare what his disciples' faith in him was : "But we trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel ;" that is, we believed that he was the Messiah, come to deliver the nation of the Jews. Upon this Jesus tells them, that they ought

to believe him to be the Messiah, notwithstanding what had happened; nay, they ought, by his suffering and death, to be confirmed in that faith, that he was the Messiah. And "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself; how, that the Messiah ought to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory." Now, he applies the prophecies of the Messiah to himself, which we read not that he did ever do before his passion. And afterwards appearing to the eleven, Luke xxiv., he said unto them, "the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scripture; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoveth the Messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Here we see what it was he had preached to them, though not in so plain open words before his crucifixion; and what it is he now makes them understand; and what it was that was to be preached to all nations, viz., that he was the Messiah, that had suffered, and rose from the dead the third day, and fulfilled all things that were written in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah; and that those who believed this, and repented, should receive remission of their sins through this faith in him. Or, as St. Mark has it, ch. xvi., "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." What the gospel, or good news was, we have showed already; viz., the happy tidings of the Messiah being come: and "they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." What the word was which they preached, and the Lord confirmed with miracles, we have seen already out of the history of their acts: I have already given an account of their preaching every where, as it is recorded in the Acts, except some few places, where the kingdom of the Messiah is mentioned under the name of "the kingdom of God," which I forbore to set down, till I had made it plain out of the evangelists, that that was no other but the kingdom of the Messiah.

132. It may be seasonable therefore now, to add to those sermons we have formerly seen of St. Paul (wherein he preached no other article of faith, but that Jesus was the Messiah, the king, who being risen from the dead, now reigneth, and shall more publicly manifest his kingdom in judging the world at the last day) what further is left upon record of his preaching. At Ephesus, Paul went into the synagogues, and spake boldly for the space of three months; disputing and persuading concerning the kingdom of God.* At Miletus he thus takes leave of the elders of Ephesus: "And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more."† What this preaching the kingdom of God was, he tells you, verse 20, 21: "I have

kept nothing back from you, which was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house; testifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." And so again: "When they [the Jews at Rome] had appointed him [Paul] a day, there came many to him into his lodgings; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God; persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning to evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.* And the history of the Acts is concluded with this account of St. Paul's preaching: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus, the Messiah." We may therefore here apply the same conclusion to the history of our Saviour written by the evangelists, and to the history of the apostles written in the Acts, which St. John does to his own gospel.† "Many other signs did Jesus before his disciples:" and in many other places the apostles preached the same doctrine, "which are not written" in these books; "but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and, that believing, you may have life in his name."

133. What St. John thought necessary and sufficient to be believed for the attaining eternal life, he here tells us. And this, not in the first dawning of the gospel, when, perhaps, some will be apt to think less was required to be believed than after the doctrine of faith, and mystery of salvation, was more fully explained in the epistles written by the apostles. For it is to be remembered, that St. John says this not as soon as Christ was ascended; for these words, with the rest of St. John's gospel, were not written till many years after, not only the other gospels, and St. Luke's history of the Acts, but, in all appearance, after all the epistles written by the other apostles. So that above threescore years after our Saviour's passion, (for so long after, both Epiphanius and St. Jerome assure us this gospel was written,) St. John knew nothing else required to be believed for the attaining of life, but that "Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God."

134. To this it is likely it will be objected by some, that to believe only that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, is but an historical and not a justifying or saving faith. To which I answer, that I allow to the makers of systems, and their followers, to invent and use what distinctions they please, and to call things by what names they think fit. But I cannot allow them, or to any man, an authority to make a religion for me, or to alter that which God hath revealed. And if they please to call the believing that which our Saviour and his apostles preached, and proposed alone to be believed, an historical faith, they have their liberty; but they must have a care how they deny it to be a justifying or saving faith, when our Saviour and his apostles have declared it so to be, and taught no other which men should receive, and whereby they should be made believers unto eternal life; unless they

* Acts xix.

† Ibid. xx.

* Acts xxviii.

† Chap. xx.

can so far make bold with our Saviour, for the sake of their beloved systems, as to say, that he forgot what he came into the world for; and that he and his apostles did not instruct people right in the way and mysteries of salvation: for that this is the sole doctrine pressed and required to be believed in the whole tenor of our Saviour's and his apostles' preaching, we have showed through the whole history of the evangelists and the Acts. And I challenge them to show that there was any other doctrine, upon their assent to which, or disbelief of it, men were pronounced believers or unbelievers; and, accordingly received into the church of Christ, as members of his body, as far as mere believing could make them so, or else kept out of it: this was the only gospel article of faith which was preached to them. And if nothing else was preached every where, the apostle's argument will hold against any other articles of faith to be believed under the gospel, Rom. x. 14: "How shall they believe that whereof they have not heard?" For to preach any other doctrines necessary to be believed, we do not find that any body was sent.

135. Perhaps it will be further argued, that this is not a saving faith, because such a faith as this the devils may have, and it was plain they had; for they believed and declared Jesus to be the Messiah. And St. James tells us, "the devils believe, and tremble;" and yet they shall not be saved. To which I answer, 1. That they could not be saved by any faith, to whom it was not proposed as a means of salvation, nor ever promised to be counted for righteousness. This was an act of grace shown only to mankind. God dealt so favorably with the posterity of Adam, that if they would believe Jesus to be the Messiah, the promised king and Saviour, and perform what other conditions were required of them by the covenant of grace, God would justify them because of this belief; he would account this faith to them for righteousness, and look on it as making up the defects of their obedience; which being thus supplied by what was taken instead of it, they were looked on as just or righteous, and so inherited eternal life. But this favor shown to mankind, was never offered to the fallen angels. They had no such proposals made to them; and therefore whatever of this kind was proposed to men, it availed not devils whatever they performed of it. This covenant of grace was never offered to them. 2. I answer, that though the devils believed, yet they could not be saved by the covenant of grace; because they performed not the other condition required in it, altogether as necessary to be performed as this of believing, and that is repentance. Repentance is as absolute a condition of the covenant of grace as faith, and as necessary to be performed as that. John the Baptist, who was to prepare the way for the Messiah, "preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

136. As John began his preaching with "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,"* so did our Saviour begin his: "From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Or, as St. Mark has it in the parallel place: "Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching

the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."* This was not only the beginning of his preaching, but the sum of all that he did preach; viz. that men should repent, and believe the good tidings which he brought them; that the time was fulfilled for the coming of the Messiah. And this was what his apostles preached, when he sent them out: "and they going out, preached that men should repent."† Believing Jesus to be the Messiah, and repenting, were so necessary and fundamental parts of the covenant of grace, that one of them alone is often put for both. For here St. Mark mentions nothing but their preaching repentance; as St. Luke, in the parallel place, chapter ix. 6., mentions nothing but their evangelizing, or preaching the good news of the kingdom of the Messiah. And St. Paul often, in his epistles, puts faith for the whole duty of a Christian.‡ But yet the tenor of the gospel is what Christ declares, Luke xii.: "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." And in the parable of the rich man in hell, delivered by our Saviour, repentance alone is the means proposed of avoiding that place of torment. And what the tenor of the doctrine, which should be preached to the world, should be, he tells his apostles after his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 27, viz. "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name," who was the Messiah.—And accordingly believing Jesus to be the Messiah, and repenting, was what the apostles preached. So Peter began, Acts ii. 38: "Repent, and be baptized." These two things were required for the remission of sins, viz. entering themselves in the kingdom of God, and owning and professing themselves the subjects of Jesus, whom they believed to be the Messiah, and received for their Lord and King; for that was to be baptized in his name: baptism being an initiating ceremony known to the Jews, whereby those, who leaving heathenism, and professing a submission to the law of Moses, were received into the commonwealth of Israel. And so it was made use of by our Saviour, to be that solemn visible act, whereby those who believed him to be the Messiah, received him as their King, and professed obedience to him, were admitted as subjects into his kingdom: which in the Gospels is called "the kingdom of God;" and in the Acts and epistles often by another name, viz. the Church. The same St. Peter preaches again to the Jews, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."||

137. What this repentance was, which the new covenant required as one of the conditions to be performed by all those who should receive the benefits of that covenant, is plain in the Scripture, to be not only a sorrow for sins past, but (what is a natural consequence of such sorrow, if it be real)

* Mark i.

† Mark vi.

‡ And even in matters of faith, involuntary errors are harmless. "For heresy is not an error of the understanding, but an error of the will. And this is clearly insinuated in Scripture, in the style where *faith and a good life* are made one duty, and vice is called opposite to faith, and heresy opposed to holiness and sanctity."—*Liberty of Prophesying*. Sacred Classics, Vol. i. op. 31, 32.—Ed.

|| Acts iii. 19.

* Matt. iii. iv.

a turning from them, into a new and contrary life. And so they are joined together, Acts iii.: "Repent, and turn about;" or, as we render it, be converted. And, Acts xxvi.: "Repent and turn to God." And sometimes turning about is put alone to signify repentance.* Which in other words is well expressed by newness of life. For it being certain, that he who is really sorry for his sins, and abhors them, will turn from them, and forsake them; either of these acts, which have so natural a connection one with the other, may be, and is often put for both together. Repentance is a hearty sorrow for our past misdeeds, and a sincere resolution and endeavor, to the utmost of our power, to conform all our actions to the law of God. So that repentance does not consist in one single act of sorrow, (though that being the first and leading act, gives denomination to the whole,) but in doing works of repentance, in a sincere obedience to the law of Christ, the remainder of our lives. This was called for by John the Baptist, the preacher of repentance: "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." And by St. Paul here, "Repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." There are works to follow belonging to repentance, as well as sorrow for what is past. These two, faith and repentance; that is, believing Jesus to be the Messiah, and a good life, are the indispensable conditions of the new covenant, to be performed by all those who would obtain eternal life. The reasonableness, or rather necessity of which, that we may the better comprehend, we must a little look back to what was said in the beginning.

138. Adam being the Son of God, and so St. Luke calls him, chapter iii. 38, had this part also of the likeness and image of his Father, viz. that he was immortal. But Adam transgressing the command given him by his heavenly Father, incurred the penalty, forfeited that state of immortality, and became mortal. After this, Adam begot children, but they were "in his own likeness, after his own image;" mortal like their father. God, nevertheless, out of his infinite mercy, willing to bestow eternal life on mortal men, sends Jesus Christ into the world; who being conceived in the womb of a virgin (that had not known man) by the immediate power of God, was properly the Son of God; according to what the angel declared to his mother, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." So that being the Son of God, he was, like his Father, immortal; as he tells us, John v. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."

139. And that immortality is a part of that image, wherein these (who were the immediate sons of God, so as to have no other father) were made like their father, appears probable, not only from the places in Genesis concerning Adam, above taken notice of, but seems to me also to be intimated in some expressions concerning Jesus, the Son of God. In the New Testament, he is called "the image of the invisible God."† Invisi-

ble seems put in, to obviate any gross imagination, that he (as images used to do) represented God in any corporeal or visible resemblance. And there is further subjoined, to lead us into the meaning of it, "The first-born of every creature;" which is further explained, verse 18, where he is termed, "The first-born from the dead:" thereby making out, and showing himself to be the image of the invisible God; that death hath no power over him: but being the Son of God, and not having forfeited that sonship by any transgression, was the heir of eternal life; as Adam should have been, had he continued his filial duty. In the same sense the apostle seems to use the word image in other places, viz. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."* This image, to which they were conformed, seems to be immortality and eternal life. For it is remarkable, that in both these places St. Paul speaks of the resurrection, and that Christ was "the first-born among many brethren;" he being by birth the Son of God, and the others only by adoption, as we see in this same chapter: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." And hence we see that our Saviour vouchsafes to call those, who at the day of judgment are through him entering into eternal life, his brethren: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren." May we not in this find a reason why God so frequently in the New Testament, and so seldom, if at all, in the Old, is mentioned under the single title of the Father? And therefore our Saviour says, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God has now a Son again in the world, the first-born of many brethren, who all now, by the Spirit of adoption, can say, Abba, Father; and we, by adoption, being for his sake made his brethren, and the sons of God, come to share in that inheritance which was his natural right, he being by birth the Son of God: which inheritance is eternal life. And again: "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption; to wit, the redemption of our body;" whereby is plainly meant the change of these frail mortal bodies, into the spiritual immortal bodies at the resurrection: "When this mortal shall have put on immortality," which he further expresses thus: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body," &c.—To which he subjoins, "As we have borne the image of the earthy" (that is, as we have been mortal, like earthy Adam, our father, from whom we are descended, when he was turned out of paradise) "we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" into whose sonship and inheritance being adopted, we shall, at the resurrection, receive that adoption we expect; "even the redemption of our bodies;" and after his image,

* Matt. xiii. 15; Luke xxii. 32. † Col. i. 15.

* Rom. viii. 29.

which is the image of the Father, become immortal. Hear what he himself says: "They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection." And he that shall read St. Paul's argument, Acts xiii., will find, that the great evidence that Jesus was the Son of God was his resurrection. Then the image of his Father appeared in him, when he visibly entered into the state of immortality. For thus the apostle reasons: "We preach to you, how that the promise which was made to our fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.'"

140. This may serve a little to explain the immortality of the sons of God, who are in this, like their Father, made after his image and likeness. But that our Saviour was so, he himself further declares, John x., where, speaking of his life, he says:—"No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." Which he could not have had if he had been a mortal man, the son of a man of the seed of Adam; or else had by any transgression forfeited his life: for "the wages of sin is death." And he that hath incurred death for his own transgression, cannot lay down his life for another, as our Saviour professes he did. For he was the Just One, "who knew no sin, who did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth." And thus, "As by man came death, so by man came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

141. For this laying down his life for others, our Saviour tells us, "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." And this, his obedience and suffering, was rewarded with a kingdom, which he tells us, "his Father had appointed unto him;" and which it is evident, out of the epistle to the Hebrews, he had a regard to in his sufferings:—"Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Which kingdom, given him upon this account of his obedience, suffering, and death, he himself takes notice of in these words: "Jesus lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus the Messiah, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And St. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians: "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth: and

that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

142. Thus God, we see, designed his Son Christ Jesus a kingdom,—an everlasting kingdom in heaven. But "though as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and all men shall return to life again at the last day; yet all men having sinned, and thereby "come short of the glory of God," as St. Paul assures us; (that is, not attaining to the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah, which is often called the "glory of God;" as may be seen, Rom. v. 2, and xv. 7, and ii. 7; Matt. xvi. 27; Mark viii. 38; for no one who is unrighteous, that is, comes short of perfect righteousness, shall be admitted into the eternal life of that kingdom; as is declared, 1 Cor. vi. 9: "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God")—and death, the wages of sin, being the portion of all those who had transgressed the righteous law of God, the Son of God would in vain have come into the world, to lay the foundations of a kingdom, and gather together a select people out of the world, if (they being found guilty at their appearance before the judgment-seat of the righteous Judge of all men at the last day) instead of entrance into eternal life in the kingdom he had prepared for them, they should receive death, the just reward of sin, which every one of them was guilty of. This second death would have left him no subjects; and instead of those ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, there would not have been one left him to sing praises unto his name, saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." God, therefore, out of his mercy to mankind, and for the erecting of the kingdom of his Son, and furnishing it with subjects out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, proposed to the children of men, that as many of them as would believe Jesus his Son (whom he sent into the world) to be the Messiah, the promised deliverer, and would receive him for their king and ruler, should have all their past sins, disobedience, and rebellion forgiven them; and if for the future they lived in a sincere obedience to his law, to the utmost of their power, the sins of human frailty for the time to come, as well as all those of their past lives, should, for his Son's sake, because they gave themselves up to him to be his subjects, be forgiven them; and so their faith, which made them be baptized into his name, (that is, enrol themselves in the kingdom of Jesus the Messiah, and profess themselves his subjects, and consequently live by the laws of his kingdom) should be accounted to them for righteousness: that is, should supply the defects of a scanty obedience in the sight of God; who counting this faith to them for righteousness, or complete obedience, did thus justify, or make them just, and thereby capable of eternal life.

143. Now, that this is the faith for which God, of his free grace, justifies sinful man, (for it is God alone that justifieth,) we have already showed, by observing through all the history of our Saviour and the apostles, recorded in the evangelists, and in the Acts, what he and his apostles preached and proposed to be believed. We shall show now, that besides believing him to be the Messiah their

king, it was further required, that those who would have the privilege, advantage, and deliverance of his kingdom, should enter themselves into it; and by baptism being made denizens, and solemnly incorporated into that kingdom, live as became subjects obedient to the laws of it: for if they believed him to be their Messiah, the king, but would not obey his laws, and would not have him to reign over them, they were but the greater rebels; and God would not justify them for a faith that did but increase their guilt, and oppose diametrically the kingdom and design of the Messiah "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 14. And therefore St. Paul tells the Galatians, that that which availeth is faith; but "faith working by love:" and that "faith without works," that is, the works of sincere obedience to the law and will of Christ, is not sufficient for our justification, St. James shows at large, chap. ii.

144. Neither indeed could it be otherwise; for life, eternal life, being the reward of justice or righteousness only, appointed by the righteous God (who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity) to those only who had no taint or infection of sin upon them, it is impossible that he should justify those who had no regard to justice at all, whatever they believed. This would have been to encourage iniquity, contrary to the purity of his nature, and to have condemned that eternal law of right which is holy, just, and good: of which no one precept or rule is abrogated or repealed, nor indeed can be, whilst God is an holy, just, and righteous God, and man a rational creature. The duties of that law, arising from the constitution of his very nature, are of eternal obligation; nor can it be taken away, or dispensed with, without changing the nature of things, or overturning the measures of right and wrong, and thereby introducing and authorizing irregularity, confusion, and disorder in the world. Christ's coming into the world was not for such an end as that; but, on the contrary, to reform the corrupt state of degenerate man, and out of those who would mend their lives, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance, erect a new kingdom.

145. This is the law of that kingdom, as well as of all mankind; and that law by which all men shall be judged at the last day. Only those who have believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and have taken him to be their king, with a sincere endeavour after righteousness, in obeying his law, shall have their past sins not imputed to them; and shall have that faith taken instead of obedience, where frailty and weakness made them transgress, and sin prevailed after conversion in those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, (or perfect obedience,) and do not allow themselves in acts of disobedience and rebellion, against the laws of that kingdom they are entered into. He did not expect, it is true, a perfect obedience, void of all slips and falls; he knew our make, and the weakness of our constitutions too well, and was sent with a supply for that defect. Besides, perfect obedience was the righteousness of the law of works; and then the reward would be of debt, and not of grace; and to such there was no need of faith to be imputed to them for righteousness. They stood upon

their own legs, were just already, and needed no allowance to be made them for believing Jesus to be the Messiah, taking him for their king, and becoming his subjects. But that Christ does require obedience, sincere obedience, is evident from the laws he himself delivers, (unless he can be supposed to give and inculcate laws only to have them disobeyed,) and from the sentence he will pass when he comes to judge.

146. The faith required was, to believe Jesus to be the Messiah, the anointed, who had been promised by God to the world. Amongst the Jews (to whom the promises and prophecies of the Messiah were more immediately delivered) anointing was used to three sorts of persons at their inauguration, whereby they were set apart to three great offices, viz., of priests, prophets, and kings. Though these three offices be in holy writ attributed to our Saviour, yet I do not remember that he any where assumes to himself the title of a priest, or mentions any thing relating to his priesthood; nor does he speak of his being a prophet but very sparingly, and once or twice, as it were, by the by: but the gospel, or the good news of the kingdom of the Messiah, is what he preaches every where, and makes it his great business to publish to the world. This he did, not only as most agreeable to the expectation of the Jews, who looked for their Messiah chiefly as coming in power to be their king and deliverer; but as it best answered the chief end of his coming, which was to be a king, and as such to be received by those who would be his subjects in the kingdom which he came to erect. And though he took not directly on himself the title of king till he was in custody, and in the hands of Pilate, yet it is plain king, and king of Israel, were the familiar and received titles of the Messiah.* What those were to do, who believed him to be the Messiah, and received him for their king, that they might be admitted to be partakers with him of his kingdom in glory, we shall best know by the laws he gives them, and requires them to obey; and by the sentence which he himself will give, when, sitting on his throne, they shall all appear at his tribunal, to receive every one his doom from the mouth of this righteous Judge of all men.

147. What he proposes to his followers to be believed, we have already seen, by examining his, and his apostles' preaching, step by step, all through the history of the four evangelists, and the Acts of the Apostles. The same method will best and plainest show us, whether he required of those who believed him to be the Messiah, any thing besides that faith, and what it was. For he being a king, we shall see by his commands what he expects from his subjects: for if he did not expect obedience to them, his commands would be but mere mockery; and if there were no punishment for the transgressors of them, his laws would not be the laws of a king, that had authority to command, and power to chastise the disobedient; but empty talk, without force, and without influence.

* See John i. 50; Luke xix. 38, compared with Matt. xxi. 9, and Mark xi. 9; John xii. 13; Matt. xxi. 5; Luke xxiii. 2, compared with Matt. xxvii. 11, and John xviii. 33, 37; Mark xv. 12, compared with Matt. xxvii. 22; Matt. xxvii. 42.

148. We shall therefore, from his injunctions, (if any such there be,) see what he has made necessary to be performed, by all those who shall be received into eternal life in his kingdom prepared in the heavens : and in this we cannot be deceived. What we have from his own mouth, especially if repeated over and over again, in different places and expressions, will be past doubt and controversy. I shall pass by all that is said by St. John Baptist, or any other, before our Saviour's entry upon his ministry and public promulgation of the laws of his kingdom. He began his preaching with a command to repent ; as St. Matthews tells us : "From that time Jesus began to preach ; saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ;" and, Luke v. 32, he tells the Scribes and Pharisees, "I come not to call the righteous," (those who were truly so, needed no help ; they had a right to the tree of life,) "but sinners to repentance."

149. In his sermon, as it is called, in the mount, he commands they should be exemplary in good works. "Let your light so shine amongst men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." And that they might know what he came for, and what he expected of them, he tells them, "Think not that I am come to dissolve or loosen the law, or the prophets : I am not come to dissolve or loosen, but to make it full, or complete ;" by giving it you in its true and strict sense. Here we see he confirms, and at once reinforces all the moral precepts in the Old Testament. "For verily I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be done. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least (that is, as it is interpreted, shall not be at all) in the kingdom of heaven. I say unto you, that except your righteousness," that is, your performance of the eternal law of right, "shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven ;" and then he goes on to make good what he said, "that he was come to complete the law," viz., by giving its full and clear sense, free from the corrupt and loosening glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. He tells them, that not only murder, but causeless anger, and so much as words of contempt, were forbidden. He commands them to be reconciled and kind towards their adversaries ; and that upon pain of condemnation. In the following part of his sermon, which is to be read, Luke vi., and more at large, Matt. v. vi. vii., he not only forbids actual uncleanness, but all irregular desires, upon pain of hell-fire ; causeless divorces, swearing in conversation, as well as forswearing in judgment, revenge, retaliation, ostentation of charity, of devotion, and of fasting, repetitions in prayer, covetousness, worldly care, censoriousness : and on the other side, commands loving our friends, doing good to those that hate us, blessing those that curse us, praying for those that despitefully use us ; patience and meekness under injuries ; forgiveness, liberality, compassion : and closes all his particular injunctions with this general golden rule : "All things whatsoever ye would have that men should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets."

And to show how much he is in earnest, and expects obedience to these laws, he tells them, that if they obey, "great shall be their reward ; they shall be called the sons of the Highest."* And to all this, in the conclusion, he adds this solemn sanction : "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say ?" It is in vain for you to take me for the Messiah, your king, unless you obey me. "Not every one who calls me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, or be the sons of God ; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven." To such disobedient subjects, though they have prophesied and done miracles in my name, I shall say at the day of judgment, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not."

150. When he was told that his mother and brethren sought to speak with him, "stretching out his hands to his disciples, he said, Behold my mother and my brethren : for whosoever shall do the will of my Father, who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." They could not be children of the adoption, and fellow-heirs with him of eternal life, who did not do the will of his heavenly Father. Matt. xv. and Mark vii., the Pharisees finding fault, that his disciples eat with unclean hands, he makes this declaration to his apostles : "Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever from without entereth into a man, cannot defile him ; because it enters not into his heart, but his belly, That which cometh out of the man that defileth the man : for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, false witnesses, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these ill things come from within, and defile a man." He commands self-denial, and the exposing ourselves to suffering and danger, rather than to deny or disown him ; and this upon pain of losing our souls, which are of more worth than all the world.†

151. The apostles disputing amongst them who should be greatest in the kingdom of the Messiah, he thus determines the controversy : "If any one will be first, let him be last of all, and servant of all ;" and setting a child before them, adds, "Verily I say unto you, unless ye turn, and become as children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xviii. 15, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone ; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother ; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church ; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and publican. Peter said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? till seven times ? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee till seven times, but until seventy times seven." And then ends the parable of the servant, who being himself forgiven, was rigorous to his fellow-servant, with these words :—"And his lord was wrath, and delivered

* Luke vi. 35.

† This we may read, Matt. xvi. 24, 27, and the parallel places. Matt. xviii. and Luke ix.

him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Luke x. 25, to the lawyer, asking him,—“What shall I do to inherit eternal life? he said, What is written in the law? How readest thou? He answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” Jesus said, “This do, and thou shalt live.” And when the lawyer, upon our Saviour’s parable of the good Samaritan, was forced to confess, that he that showed mercy was his neighbor,—Jesus dismissed him with this charge: “Go, and do thou likewise.” Luke xi. 41,—“Give alms of such things as ye have: behold, all things are clean unto you.” Luke xii. 15,—“Take heed, and beware of covetousness. Be not solicitous what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor what ye shall put on;” be not fearful or apprehensive of want, “for it is your Father’s pleasure to give you a kingdom. Sell that you have and give alms: and provide yourselves bags that wax not old, and treasure in the heavens that faileth not; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for the lord, when he will return. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching.—Blessed is that servant, whom the lord having made ruler of his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season, the lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him a ruler over all that he hath. But if that servant say in his heart, my lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with unbelievers. And that servant who knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself,—neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes: for he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” Luke xiv. 11: “Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Verse 12: “When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, or thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor and maimed, the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” Verse 33: “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that is not ready to forego all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke xvi. 9: “I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mam-

mon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?” Luke xvii. 3: “If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him.” Luke xviii. 1: “He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Verse 18: “One comes to him, and asks him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus said to him, if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He says, which? Jesus said, thou knowest the commandments: Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Defraud not; Honor thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. He said, all these have I observed from my youth. Jesus hearing this, loved him; and said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing:—sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.” To understand this right, we must take notice, that this young man asks our Saviour what he must do to be admitted effectually into the kingdom of the Messiah? The Jews believed that when the Messiah came, those of their nation that received him should not die; but that they, with those who, being dead, should then be raised again by him, should enjoy eternal life with him. Our Saviour, in answer to this demand, tells the young man, that to obtain the eternal life of the kingdom of the Messiah, he must keep the commandments. And then enumerating several of the precepts of the law, the young man says he had observed these from his childhood: for which, the text tells us, Jesus loved him. But our Saviour, to try whether in earnest he believed him to be the Messiah, and resolved to take him to be his king, and to obey him as such, bids him give all he has to the poor, and come, and follow him, and he should have treasure in heaven. This I look on to be the meaning of the place: this of selling all he had, and giving it to the poor, not being a standing law of his kingdom,* but a probationary command to this young man, to try whether he truly believed him to be the Messiah, and was ready to obey his commands, and relinquish all to follow him, when he, his prince, required it.

152. And therefore we see, Luke xix. 14, where our Saviour takes notice of the Jews not receiving him as the Messiah, he expresses it thus:—“We will not have this man to reign over us.” It is not enough to believe him to be the Messiah, un-

* Doubtless not; yet he who revels in superfluities while his poorer brother in Christ lacks the very necessities of life, is, in the true sense of the words,—not a Christian. Few, I am afraid, are inclined to interpret this, and similar passages, half so literally as they were meant: but, if Christ never intended we should sell all, and give it to the poor, which would render us poorer than any of them, he doubtless did intend we should suffer them to partake of what we have, and we can never be his disciples unless we do so.—ED.

less we also obey his laws, and take him to be our king to reign over us. Matt. xxii. 11—13: He that had not on the wedding garment, though he accepted of the invitation, and came to the wedding, was cast into outer darkness. By the wedding garment, it is evident good works are meant here. That wedding garment of fine linen, clean and white, which we are told is the δικαιοσύνη, "righteous acts of the saints;"* or, as St. Paul calls it, "the walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called."† This appears from the parable itself:—"The kingdom of heaven," says our Saviour, "is like unto a king who made a marriage for his son." And here he distinguishes those who were invited into three sorts:—1. Those who were invited, and came not; that is, those who had the gospel, the good news of the kingdom of God proposed to them, but believed not. 2. Those who came, but had not on a wedding garment; that is, believed Jesus to be the Messiah, but were not new clad (as I may so say) with a true repentance and amendment of life, nor adorned with those virtues which the apostle, Col. iii., requires to be put on. 3. Those who were invited, did come, and had on the wedding garment; that is, heard the gospel, believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and sincerely obeyed his laws. These three sorts are plainly designed here,—whereof the last only were the blessed, who were to enjoy the kingdom prepared for them. Matt. xxiii.: "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even the Messiah, and ye all are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even the Messiah. But he that is greatest amongst you, shall be your servant; and whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted. Luke xxi. 31:—"Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be at any time overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life." Luke xvii. 25: "He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest amongst you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." John xiii. 34: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." This command of loving one another, is repeated again, chap. xv. 12—17. John xiv.: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. If a man loveth me, he will keep my words. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." John xv.: "In this is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

153. Thus we see our Saviour not only confirmed the moral law, and clearing it from the corrupt glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, showed

the strictness as well as obligation of its injunctions; but moreover, upon occasion, requires the obedience of his disciples to several of the commands he afresh lays upon them, with the enforcement of unspeakable rewards and punishments in another world, according to their obedience or disobedience. There is not, I think, any of the duties of morality which he has not, some where or other, by himself and his apostles, inculcated over and over again to his followers in express terms. And is it for nothing that he is so instant with them to bring forth fruit? Does he their king command, and is it an indifferent thing? Or will their happiness or misery not at all depend upon it, whether they obey or no? They were required to believe him to be the Messiah; which faith is of grace promised to be reckoned to them for the completing of their righteousness, wherein it was defective: but righteousness, or obedience to the law of God, was their great business, which, if they could have attained by their own performances, there would have been no need of this gracious allowance in reward of their faith; but eternal life, after the resurrection, had been their due by a former covenant, even that of works, the rule whereof was never abolished, though the rigor was abated. The duties enjoined in it were duties still: their obligations had never ceased, nor a wilful neglect of them was ever dispensed with; but their past transgressions were pardoned to those who received Jesus, the promised Messiah, for their king; and their future slips covered, if, renouncing their former iniquities, they entered into his kingdom, and continued his subjects, with a steady resolution and endeavor to obey his laws. The righteousness therefore, a complete obedience and freedom from sin, are still sincerely to be endeavored after: and it is no where promised, that those who persist in a wilful disobedience to his laws, shall be received into the eternal bliss of his kingdom, how much soever they believe in him.

154. A sincere obedience, how can any one doubt to be, or scruple to call, a condition of the new covenant, as well as faith, who ever read our Saviour's sermon on the mount, to omit all the rest? Can any thing be more express than these words of our Lord: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses:" and, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them!" This is so indispensable a condition of the new covenant, that believing without it will not do, nor be accepted, if our Saviour knew the terms on which he would admit men into life. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord," says he, "and do not the things which I say?"* It is not enough to believe him to be the Messiah, the Lord, without obeying him: for that these he speaks to here were believers is evident from the parallel place, where it is recorded: "Not every one who says Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in heaven."† No rebels, or refractory disobedient, shall be admitted there, though they have so far believed in Jesus as to be able to do miracles in his name;

* Rev. xix. 8.

† Ephes. iv. 1.

* Luke vi. 46.

† Matt. vii. 21—23.

as is plain out of the following words ; " Many will say to me in that day, Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works ? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me, ye workers of iniquity ! "

155. This part of the new covenant the apostles also, in their preaching the gospel of the Messiah, ordinarily joined with the doctrine of faith. St. Peter, in his first sermon, Acts ii., when they were pricked in heart, and asked, " What shall we do ? " says, verse 38, " Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. " The same he says to them again in his next speech, Acts iv. 26 : " Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you. " How was this done ? " In turning away every one from your iniquities. " The same doctrine they preach to the high-priest and rulers : " The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins : and we are witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. " * Acts xvii. 30 : St. Paul tells the Athenians, that now, under the gospel, " God commandeth all men every where to repent. " Acts xx. 21 : St. Paul, in his last conference with the elders of Ephesus, professes to have taught them the whole doctrine necessary to salvation. " I have, " says he, " kept back nothing that was profitable unto you ; but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks ; " and then gives an account what his preaching had been, viz. " Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus, the Messiah. " This was the sum and substance of the gospel which St. Paul preached, and was all that he knew necessary to salvation, viz. " repentance, and believing Jesus to be the Messiah ; " and so takes his last farewell of them whom he should never see again, verse 32, in these words : " And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. " There is an inheritance conveyed by the word and covenant of grace, but it is only to those who are sanctified.

156. Acts xxiv. 24 : When Felix sent for Paul, that he and his wife Drusilla might hear him, concerning the faith in Christ, Paul reasoned of righteousness, or justice, and temperance ; the duties we owe to others, and to ourselves, and of the judgment to come ; till he made Felix to tremble. Whereby it appears, that temperance and justice were fundamental parts of the religion that Paul professed, and were contained in the faith which he preached. And if we find the duties of the moral law not pressed by him every where, we must remember, that most of his sermons left upon record, were preached in their synagogues to the Jews, who acknowledged their obedience due to all the precepts of the law, and would have taken it amiss to have been suspected not to have been

more zealous for the law than he ; and therefore it was with reason that his discourses were directed chiefly to what they yet wanted, and were averse to, the knowledge and embracing of Jesus, their promised Messiah. But what his preaching generally was, if we will believe him himself, we may see, Acts xxvi., where, giving an account to king Agrippa of his life and doctrine, he tells him, " I showed unto them at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. "

157. Thus we see, by the preaching of our Saviour and his apostles, that he required of those who believed him to be the Messiah, and received him for their Lord and deliverer, that they should live by his laws ; and that (though in consideration of their becoming his subjects, by faith in him, whereby they believed and took him to be the Messiah, their former sins should be forgiven) yet he would own none to be his, nor receive them as true denizens of the New Jerusalem, into the inheritance of eternal life, but leave them to the condemnation of the unrighteous, who renounced not their former miscarriages, and lived in a sincere obedience to his commands. What he expects from his followers, he has sufficiently declared as a legislator ; and that they may not be deceived, by mistaking the doctrine of faith, grace, free grace, and the pardon and forgiveness of sins and salvation by him, (which was the great end of his coming,) he more than once declares to them for what omissions and miscarriages he shall judge and condemn to death, even those who have owned him, and done miracles in his name, when he comes at last to render to every one according to what he had done in the flesh, sitting upon his great and glorious tribunal, at the end of the world.

158. The first place where we find our Saviour to have mentioned the day of judgment is John v. 28, 29, in these words : " The hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his [that is, the Son of God's] voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. " That which puts the distinction, if we will believe our Saviour, is the having " done good or evil ; " and he gives a reason of the necessity of his judging or condemning those " who have done evil, " in the following words, verse 30 : " I can of my myself do nothing. As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just ; because I seek not my own will, but the will of my Father who hath sent me. " He could not judge of himself ; he had but a delegated power of judging from the Father, whose will he obeyed in it, and who was of purer eyes than to admit any unjust person into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. vii. 22, 23 : Speaking again of that day, he tells what his sentence will be : " Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. " Faith, in the penitent and sincerely obedient, supplies the defect of their performances, and so by grace they are made just. But we may observe, none are sentenced or punished for unbelief, but only for their misdeeds. They " are workers of iniquity, " on whom the sentence is pronounced. Matt. xiii. 14 : " At the

* Acts v. 30.

end of the world, the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them which do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." And again: "The angels shall sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." Matt. xvi. 24: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Luke xiii. 26: "Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not: Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." Matt. xxv. 24—26: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left: then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee?" &c. "And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Inasmuch that ye did it not to one of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

159. These, I think, are all the places where our Saviour mentions the last judgment, or describes his way of proceeding in that great day; wherein, as we have observed, it is remarkable, that every where the sentence follows doing or not doing, without any mention of believing, or not believing. Not that any to whom the gospel hath been preached shall be saved without believing Jesus to be the Messiah; for all being sinners, and transgressors of the law, and so unjust, are all liable to condemnation, unless they believe, and so through grace are justified by God for this faith, which shall be accounted to them for righteousness: but the rest, wanting this cover, this allowance for their transgressions, must answer for all their actions; and being found transgressors of the law, shall, by the letter and sanction of that law, be condemned, for not having paid a full obedience to that law, and not for want of faith; that is not the guilt on which the punishment is laid, though it be the want of faith which lays open their guilt uncovered, and exposes them to the sentence of the law against all that are unrighteous.

160. The common objection here is, if all sinners shall be condemned, but such as have a gracious allowance made them, and so are justified by God for believing Jesus to be the Messiah, and

so taking him for their king, whom they are resolved to obey to the utmost of their power, what shall become of all mankind who lived before our Saviour's time, who never heard of his name, and consequently could not believe in him? To this the answer is so obvious and natural, that one would wonder how any reasonable man should think it worth the urging. Nobody was, or can be, required to believe what was never proposed to him to believe. Before the fulness of time, which God from the council of his own wisdom had appointed to send his Son in, he had, at several times and in different manners, promised to the people of Israel an extraordinary person to come, who, raised from amongst themselves, should be their ruler and deliverer. The time, and other circumstances of his birth, life, and person, he had, in sundry prophecies, so particularly described, and so plainly foretold, that he was well known and expected by the Jews, under the name of the Messiah, or Anointed, given him in some of these prophecies. All then that was required before his appearing in the world was, to believe what God had revealed, and to rely with a full assurance on God for the performance of his promise; and to believe, that in due time he would send them the Messiah, this anointed king, this promised Saviour and deliverer, according to his word. This faith in the promises of God, this relying and acquiescing in his word and faithfulness, the Almighty takes well at our hands, as a great mark of homage, paid by us frail creatures, to his goodness and truth, as well as to his power and wisdom; and accepts it as an acknowledgment of his peculiar providence and benignity to us. And therefore our Saviour tells us, John xii. 44: "He that believes on me, believes not on me, but on him that sent me." The works of nature show his wisdom and power: but it is his peculiar care of mankind, most eminently discovered in his promises to them, that shows his bounty and goodness; and consequently engages their hearts in love and affection to him. This oblation of a heart fixed with dependence on, and affection to him, is the most acceptable tribute we can pay him; the foundation of true devotion, and life of all religion. What a value he puts on this depending on his word, and resting satisfied in his promises, we have an example in Abraham, whose faith "was counted to him for righteousness," as we have before remarked out of Rom. iv. And his relying firmly on the promises of God, without any doubt of its performance, gave him the name of the father of the faithful, and gained him so much favor with the Almighty, that he was called the "friend of God;" the highest and most glorious title that can be bestowed on a creature. The thing promised was no more but a son by his wife Sarah, and a numerous posterity by him, which should possess the land of Canaan. These were but temporal blessings, and (except the birth of a son) very remote, such as he should never live to see, nor in his own person have the benefit of; but because he questioned not the performance of it, but rested fully satisfied in the goodness, truth, and faithfulness of God who had promised, it was counted to him for righteousness. Let us see how St. Paul expresses it: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken,

So shall thy seed be : and being not weak in his faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old ; neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb : he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God ; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform : and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.* St. Paul having here emphatically described the strength and firmness of Abraham's faith, informs us, that he thereby gave glory to God ; and therefore it was accounted to him for righteousness. This is the way that God deals with poor frail mortals. He is graciously pleased to take it well of them, and give it the place of righteousness, and a kind of merit in his sight, if they believe his promises, and have a steadfast relying on his veracity and goodness. St. Paul tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please God : †" but at the same time tells us what faith that is. "For," says he, "he that cometh to God, must believe that he is ; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." He must be persuaded of God's mercy and good will to those who seek to obey him, and rest assured of his rewarding those who rely on him, for whatever, either by the light of nature or particular promises, he has revealed to them of his tender mercies, and taught them to expect from his bounty. This description of faith (that we might not mistake what he means by that faith without which we cannot please God, and which recommended the saints of old) St. Paul places in the middle of the list of those who were eminent for their faith, and whom he sets as patterns to the converted Hebrews under persecution, to encourage them to persist in their confidence of deliverance by the coming of Jesus Christ, and in their belief of the promises they now had under the gospel : by those examples he exhorts them not to draw back from the hope that was set before them, nor apostatize from the profession of the Christian religion. This is plain from verses 35—38, of the precedent chapter : "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have great need of persisting," or perseverance, (for so the Greek word signifies here, which our translation renders patience, ‡) "that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

161. The examples of faith which St. Paul enumerates and proposes in the following words, plainly show, that the faith whereby those believers of old pleased God, was nothing but a steadfast reliance on the goodness and faithfulness of God, for those good things which either the light of nature or particular promises had given them grounds to hope for. Of what avail this faith was with God we may see : "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain ; by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. By faith Enoch was translated that

he should not see death ; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet," being wary, "by faith prepared an ark, to the saving of his house ; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." And what it was that God so graciously accepted and rewarded we are told, verse 11 : "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child, when she was past age." How she came to obtain this grace from God the apostle tells us : "Because she judged him faithful who had promised." Those therefore who pleased God, and were accepted by him before the coming of Christ, did it only by believing the promises, and relying on the goodness of God, as far as he had revealed it to them. For the apostle, in the following words, tells us, verse 13 : "These all died in faith, not having received (the accomplishment of) the promises ; but having seen them afar off : and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." This was all that was required of them, to be persuaded of, and embrace the promises which they had. They could be persuaded of no more than was proposed to them ; embrace no more than was revealed, according to the promises they had received, and the dispensations they were under. And if the faith of things "seen afar off ;" if their trusting in God for the promises he then gave them ; if a belief of the Messiah to come, were sufficient to render those who lived in the ages before Christ, acceptable to God and righteous before him, I desire those who tell us that God will not (nay, some go so far as to say cannot) accept any who do not believe every article of their particular creeds and systems, to consider, why God, out of his infinite mercy, cannot as well justify man now for believing Jesus of Nazareth to be the promised Messiah, the king and deliverer, as those heretofore, who believed only that God would, according to his promise, in due time, send the Messiah to be a king and deliverer ?

162. There is another difficulty often to be met with, which seems to have something of more weight in it ; and that is, that though the faith of those before Christ (believing that God would send the Messiah, to be a prince, and a Saviour to his people, as he had promised) and the faith of those since his time (believing Jesus to be that Messiah, promised and sent by God) shall be accounted to them for righteousness ; yet what shall become of all the rest of mankind, who having never heard of the promise or news of a Saviour, not a word of a Messiah to be sent, or that was come, have had no thought or belief concerning him ?

163. To this I answer, that God will require of every man according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not. He will not expect ten talents where he gave but one ; nor require any one should believe a promise of which he has never heard. The apostle's reasoning, Rom. x. 14, is very just : "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ?" But though there be many who, being strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, were also strangers to the oracles of God committed to that people ; many, to whom the promise of the Messiah never came, and so were never in a capacity to believe or reject that

* Rom. iv. 18—22.

† Heb. xi. 6.

‡ See Luke viii. 15.

revelation; yet God had, by the light of reason, revealed to all mankind, who would make use of that light, that he was good and merciful. The same spark of the divine nature and knowledge in man, which, making him a man, showed him the law he was under as a man, showed him also the way of atoning the merciful, kind, compassionate Author and Father of him and his being, when he had transgressed that law. He that made use of this candle of the Lord, so far as to find what was his duty, could not miss to find also the way to reconciliation and forgiveness, when he had failed of his duty; though, if he used not his reason this way, if he put out, or neglected this light, he might, perhaps, see neither.

164. The law is the eternal, immutable standard of right. And a part of that law is, that a man should forgive, not only his children, but his enemies, upon their repentance, asking pardon and amendment; and therefore he could not doubt that the author of this law, and God of patience and consolation, who is rich in mercy, would forgive his frail offspring, if they acknowledged their faults, disapproved the iniquity of their transgressions, begged his pardon, and resolved in earnest for the future to confirm their actions to this rule, which they owned to be just and right. This way of reconciliation, this hope of atonement, the light of nature revealed to them. And the revelation of the gospel having said nothing to the contrary, leaves them to stand and fall to their own Father, and Master, whose goodness and mercy is over all his works. I know some are forward to use that place of the Acts, chap. iv., as contrary to this. The words, verses 10 and 12, stand thus: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man [that is, the lame man restored by Peter] stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, in which we must be saved." Which, in short, is, that Jesus is the only true Messiah; neither is there any other person but he given to be a mediator between God and man, in whose name we may ask and hope for salvation.

165. It will here possibly be asked, *Quorsum perditio hæc?* What need was there of a Saviour? What advantage have we by Jesus Christ? It is enough to justify the fitness of any thing to be done, by resolving it into the wisdom of God, who has done it, though our short views and narrow understandings may utterly incapacitate us to see that wisdom, and to judge rightly of it. We know little of this visible, and nothing at all of the state of that intellectual world, wherein are infinite numbers and degrees of spirits, out of the reach of our ken or guess; and therefore know not what transactions there were between God and our Saviour, in reference to his kingdom. We know not what need there was to set up a head and a chieftain, in opposition to "the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air," &c. whereof there are more than obscure intimations in Scripture: and we shall take too much upon us, if we shall call God's wisdom or providence to account, and perty

condemn for needless, all that our weak and, perhaps, biassed understandings cannot account for.

166. Though this general answer be reply enough to the forementioned demand, and such as a rational man, or fair searcher after truth, will acquiesce in; yet in this particular case, the wisdom and goodness of God has shown itself so visibly to common apprehensions, that it hath furnished us abundantly wherewithal to satisfy the curious and inquisitive; who will not take a blessing, unless they be instructed what need they had of it, and why it was bestowed upon them. The great and many advantages we receive by the coming of Jesus the Messiah, will show that it was not without need that he was sent into the world. The evidence of our Saviour's mission from heaven is so great, in the multitude of miracles he did before all sorts of people, that what he delivered cannot but be received as the oracles of God, and unquestionable verity; for the miracles he did were so ordered by the divine Providence and wisdom, that they never were, nor could be denied by any of the enemies or opposers of Christianity.

167. Though the works of nature, in every part of them, sufficiently evidence a Deity, yet the world made so little use of their reason, that they saw him not, where even by the impressions of himself he was easy to be found. Sense and lust blinded their minds in some, and a careless inadvertency in others, and fearful apprehensions in most, (who either believed there were, or could not but suspect there might be superior unknown beings,) gave them up into the hands of their priests, to fill their heads with false notions of the Deity, and their worship with foolish rites, as they pleased; and what dread or craft once began, devotion soon made sacred, and religion immutable. In this state of darkness and ignorance of the true God, vice and superstition held the world; nor could any help be had or hoped for from reason, which could not be heard, and was judged to have nothing to do in the case; the priests every where, to secure their empire, having excluded reason* from having any thing to do in religion. And in the crowd of wrong notions, and invented rites, the world had almost lost the sight of the one only true God. The rational and thinking part of mankind, it is true, when they sought after him, found the one, supreme, invisible God; but if they acknowledged and worshipped him, it was only in their own minds. They kept this truth locked up in their own breasts as a secret, nor ever durst venture it amongst the people, much less the priests, those

* But by false pretenders to religion *reason* is still in a great measure proscribed. The sketch that follows of paganism is scarcely correct: in many countries of antiquity the priests gained very little by their false religion which they might not have gained by the true one. Priests, moreover, were far less numerous in antiquity than in modern times, and their gains were infinitely smaller. The religion they taught, also, was better than none; and, though it is customary to abuse priests, perhaps, if we would be just, we should acknowledge that, even in pagan times, there was considerable utility in their establishments, which kept alive, in many places, the flame of piety, and was always more or less favorable to virtue.—Ed.

wary guardians of their own creeds and profitable inventions. Hence we see that reason, speaking never so clearly to the wise and virtuous, had never authority enough to prevail on the multitude, and to persuade the societies of men that there was but one God, that alone was to be owned and worshipped. The belief and worship of one God was the national religion of the Israelites alone; and, if we will consider it, it was introduced and supported amongst that people by revelation. They were in Goshen, and had light, whilst the rest of the world were in almost Egyptian darkness, without God in the world. There was no part of mankind who had quicker parts, or improved them more; that had a greater light of reason, or followed it further in all sorts of speculations, than the Athenians; and yet we find but one Socrates amongst them, that opposed and laughed at their polytheisms and wrong opinions of the Deity; and we see how they rewarded him for it.* Whatsoever Plato and the soberest of the philosophers thought of the nature and being of the one God, they were fain, in their outward worship, to go with the herd, and to keep to the religion established by law; which what it was, and how it had disposed the mind of these knowing and quick-sighted Grecians, St. Paul tells us, Acts xviii.: "Ye men of Athens," says he, "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious: for as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all the nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel him out, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." Here he tells the Athenians, that they and the rest of the world (given up to superstition) whatever light there was, in the works of creation and providence, to lead them to the true God, yet they few of them found him. He was every where near them; yet they were but like people groping and feeling for something in the dark, and did not see him with a full clear daylight; "but thought the godhead like to gold, and silver, and stone, graven by art and man's device."

168. In this state of darkness and error in reference to the true God, our Saviour found the world. But the clear revelation he brought with him, dissipated this darkness; made the one invisible true God known to the world; and that with such evidence and energy, that polytheism and idolatry hath no where been able to withstand it. But wherever the preaching of the truth be deli-

vered, and the light of the gospel hath come, those mists have been dispelled; and, in effect, we see that, since our Saviour's time, the belief of one God has prevailed and spread itself over the face of the earth. For even to the light that the Messiah brought into the world with him, we must ascribe the owning and profession of one God, which the Mahometan religion hath derived and borrowed from it. So that, in this sense, it is certainly and manifestly true of our Saviour, what St. John says of him, 1 John iii. 8: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." This light the world needed, and this light it received from him—that there is but one God, and he eternal, invisible; not like to any visible objects, nor to be represented by them.

169. If it be asked, whether the revelation to the patriarchs by Moses did not teach this, and why that was not enough? the answer is obvious; that however clearly the knowledge of one invisible God, maker of heaven and earth, was revealed to them, yet that revelation was shut up in a little corner of the world, amongst a people, by that very law which they received with it, excluded from a commerce and communication with the rest of mankind. The Gentile world, in our Saviour's time, and several ages before, could have no attestation of the miracles on which the Hebrews built their faith, but from the Jews themselves; a people not known to the greatest part of mankind, contemned and thought vilely of by those nations that did know them; and therefore very unfit and unable to propagate the doctrine of one God in the world, and diffuse it through the nations of the earth, by the strength and force of that ancient revelation, upon which they had received it. But our Saviour, when he came, threw down this wall of partition, and did not confine his miracles or message to the land of Canaan, or the worshippers at Jerusalem; but he himself preached at Samaria, and did miracles in the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and before multitudes of people gathered from all quarters. And after his resurrection sent his apostles amongst the nations, accompanied with miracles, which were done in all parts so frequently, and before so many witnesses of all sorts, in broad daylight, that, as I have before observed, the enemies of Christianity have never dared to deny them; no, not Julian himself, who neither wanted skill nor power to inquire into the truth, nor would have failed to have proclaimed and exposed it, if he could have detected any falsehood in the history of the gospel, or found the least ground to question the matter of fact published of Christ and his apostles. The number and evidence of the miracles done by our Saviour and his followers, by the power and force of truth, bore down this mighty and accomplished emperor, and all his parts, in his own dominions. He durst not deny so plain matter of fact; which being granted, the truth of our Saviour's doctrine and mission unavoidably follows, notwithstanding whatsoever artful suggestions his wit could invent, or malice should offer to the contrary.

170. 2. Next to the knowledge of one God, maker of all things, a clear knowledge of their duty was wanting to mankind. This part of knowledge, though cultivated with some care, by

* Nevertheless, among the Greek philosophers, the unity of God was clearly enough expressed in their writings; and it is supposed, with considerable probability, that this was the true secret revealed in the mysteries, the knowledge of which was supposed to secure happiness in a future state. Aristophan. *Συγνή*, 375. *Βαρυα*, 451. et Brunck. ad loc.

some of the heathen philosophers, yet got little footing among the people. All men indeed, under pain of displeasing the gods, were to frequent the temples; every one went to their sacrifices and services; but the priests made it not their business to teach them virtue. If they were diligent in their observations and ceremonies—punctual in their feasts and solemnities, and the tricks of religion, the holy tribe assured them, the gods were pleased; and they looked no further. Few went to the schools of the philosophers, to be instructed in their duties, and to know what was good and evil in their actions. The priests sold the better pennyworths, and therefore had all their custom. Lustrations and processions were much easier than a clean conscience, and a steady course of virtue; and an expiatory sacrifice, that atoned for the want of it, was much more convenient than a strict and holy life. No wonder, then, that religion was every where distinguished from, and preferred to virtue, and that it was dangerous heresy and profaneness to think the contrary. So much virtue as was necessary to hold societies together, and to contribute to the quiet of governments, the civil laws of commonwealths taught, and forced upon men that lived under magistrates—but these laws, being for the most part made by such who had no other aims but their own power, reached no further than those things that would serve to tie men together in subjection; or, at most, were directly to conduce to the prosperity and temporal happiness of any people. But natural religion, in its full extent, was no where, that I know, taken care of by the force of natural reason. It should seem, by the little that has hitherto been done in it, that it is too hard a task for unassisted reason, to establish morality, in all its parts, upon its true foundations, with a clear and convincing light. And it is at least a surer and shorter way, to the apprehensions of the vulgar, and mass of mankind, that one manifestly sent from God, and coming with visible authority from him, should, as a king and law-maker, tell them their duties, and require their obedience, than leave it to the long, and sometimes intricate deductions of reason, to be made out to them,—such strains of reasonings the greatest part of mankind have neither leisure to weigh, nor, for want of education and use, skill to judge of. We see how unsuccessful in this, the attempts of philosophers were, before our Saviour's time.—How short their several systems came of the perfection of a true and complete morality, is very visible. And if, since that, the Christian philosophers have much outdone them, yet we may observe, that the first knowledge of the truths they have added, are owing to revelation; though, as soon as they are heard and considered, they are found to be agreeable to reason, and such as can by no means be contradicted. Every one may observe a great many truths which he receives at first from others, and readily assents to as consonant to reason, which he would have found it hard, and perhaps, beyond his strength to have discovered himself. Native and original truth is not so easily wrought out of the mine, as we, who have it delivered ready dug and fashioned into our hands, are apt to imagine. And how often at fifty or threescore years old, are thinking men

told what they wonder how they could miss thinking of? which yet their own contemplations did not, and possibly never would have helped them to. Experience shows that the knowledge of morality, by mere natural light (how agreeable soever it be to it,) makes but a slow progress, and little advance in the world: and the reason of it is not hard to be found in men's necessities, passions, vices, and mistaken interests, which turn their thoughts another way: and the designing leaders, as well as the following herd, find it not to their purpose to employ much of their meditations this way: or whatever else was the cause, it is plain, in fact, that human reason unassisted, failed men in its great and proper business of morality. It never, from unquestionable principles, by clear deductions made out an entire body of the law of nature. And he that shall collect all the moral rules of the philosophers, and compare them with those contained in the New Testament, will find them to come short of the morality delivered by our Saviour, and taught by his apostles: a college made up, for the most part, of ignorant but inspired fishermen.

171. Though yet, if any one should think that, out of the sayings of the wise heathens, before our Saviour's time, there might be a collection made of all those rules of morality, which are to be found in the Christian religion; yet this would not at all hinder, but that the world nevertheless stood as much in need of our Saviour, and the morality delivered by him. Let it be granted (though not true) that all the moral precepts of the gospel were known by somebody or other, amongst mankind, before. But where, or how, or of what use, is not considered. Suppose they may be picked up here and there; some from Solon and Bias in Greece; others from Tully in Italy; and, to complete the work, let Confucius, as far as China, be consulted; and Anacharsis the Scythian contribute his share. What will all this do to give the world a complete morality, that may be to mankind the unquestionable rule of life and manners? I will not here urge the impossibility of collecting from men so far distant from one another, in time and place, and languages. I will suppose there was a Stobæus in those times, who had gathered the moral sayings from all the sages of the world. What would this amount to, towards being a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under? Did the saying of Aristippus or Confucius give it an authority?—Was Zeno a lawgiver to mankind? If not, what he or any other philosopher delivered was but a saying of his: mankind might hearken to it or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their interest, passions, principles, or humors: they were under no obligation; the opinion of this or that philosopher was of no authority; and if it were, you must take all he said under the same character. All his dictates must go for law, certain and true, or none of them. And then, if you will take any of the moral sayings of Epicurus (many whereof Seneca quotes, with esteem and approbation) for precepts of the law of nature, you must take all the rest of his doctrine for such too, or else his authority ceases; and so no more is to be received from him, or any of the sages of old, for parts of the law of nature, as carrying with it

an obligation to be obeyed but what they prove to be so. But such a body of ethics, proved to be the law of nature from principles of reason, and reaching all the duties of life, I think nobody will say the world had before our Saviour's time. It is not enough that there were, up and down, scattered sayings of wise men, conformable to right reason. The law of nature was the law of convenience too; and it is no wonder that those men of parts, and studious of virtue, (who had occasion to think on any particular part of it,) should by meditation light on the right, even from the observable convenience and beauty of it, without making out its obligation from the true principles of the law of nature, and foundations of morality. But these incoherent apothegms of philosophers and wise men, however excellent in themselves, and well intended by them, could never make a morality, whereof the world could be convinced; could never rise to the force of a law that mankind could with certainty depend on. Whatsoever should thus be universally useful, as a standard to which men should conform their manners, must have its authority either from reason or revelation. It is not every writer of morals, or compiler of it from others, that can thereby be erected into a lawgiver to mankind; and a dictator of rules, which are therefore valid, because they are to be found in his books, under the authority of this or that philosopher. He that any one will pretend to set up in this kind, and have his rules pass for authentic directions, must show, that either he builds his doctrine upon principles of reason, self-evident in themselves, and that he deduces all the parts of it from thence, by clear and evident demonstration; or, must show his commission from heaven, that he comes with authority from God, to deliver his will and command to the world. In the former way, nobody that I know, before our Saviour's time, ever did, or went about to give us a morality. It is true there is a law of nature: but who is there that ever did, or undertook to give it us all entire, as a law; no more nor no less than what was contained in, and had the obligation of that law? Who ever made out all the parts of it, put them together, and showed the world their obligation? Where was there any such code, that mankind might have recourse to, as their unerring rule, before our Saviour's time? If there was not, it is plain, there was need of one to give us such a morality; such a law, which might be the sure guide of those who had a desire to go right; and if they had a mind, need not mistake their duty; but might be certain when they had performed, when failed in it. Such a law of morality Jesus Christ hath given us in the New Testament; but by the latter of these ways, by revelation. We have from him a full and sufficient rule for our direction, and conformable to that of reason. But the truth and obligation of its precepts have their force, and are put past doubt to us, by the evidence of his mission. He was sent by God: his miracles show it—and the authority of God in his precepts cannot be questioned. Here morality has a sure standard, that revelation vouches, and reason cannot gainsay, nor question; but both together witness to come from God, the great law-maker.—And such a one as this out of the New Testa-

ment I think the world never had, nor can any one say is any where else to be found. Let me ask any one, who is forward to think that the doctrine of morality was full and clear in the world at our Saviour's birth, whither would he have directed Brutus and Cassius (both men of parts and virtue; the one whereof believed, and the other disbelieved a future being) to be satisfied in the rules and obligations of all the parts of their duties, if they should have asked him where they might find the law they were to live by, and by which they should be charged or acquitted, as guilty or innocent? If to the sayings of the wise, and the declarations of philosophers, he sends them into a wild wood of uncertainty, to an endless maze, from which they should never get out: if to the religions of the world, yet worse: and if to their own reason, he refers them to that which had some light and certainty; but yet had hitherto failed all mankind in a perfect rule; and we see, resolved not the doubts that had arisen amongst the studious and thinking philosophers; nor had yet been able to convince the civilized parts of the world, that they had not given, nor could, without a crime, take away the lives of their children, by exposing them.

172. If any one should think to excuse human nature, by laying blame on men's negligence, that they did not carry morality to an higher pitch, and make it out entire in every part, with that clearness of demonstration which some think it capable of, he helps not the matter. Be the cause what it will, our Saviour found mankind under a corruption of manners and principles, which ages after ages had prevailed, and must be confessed was not in a way or tendency to be mended. The rules of morality were, in different countries and sects, different. And natural reason no where had, nor was like to cure the defects and errors in them. Those just measures of right and wrong, which necessity had any where introduced, the civil laws prescribed, or philosophy recommended, stood not on their true foundations. They were looked on as bonds of society, and conveniences of common life, and laudable practices. But where was it that their obligation was thoroughly known and allowed, and they received as precepts of a law, of the highest law, the law of nature? That could not be without a clear knowledge and acknowledgment of the law-maker, and the great rewards and punishments for those that would or would not obey him. But the religion of the heathens, as was before observed, little concerned itself in their morals. The priests that delivered the oracles of heaven, and pretended to speak from the god, spoke little of virtue and a good life. And, on the other side, the philosophers who spoke from reason, made not much mention of the deity in their ethics. They depended on reason and her oracles, which contain nothing but truth: but yet some parts of that truth lie too deep for our natural powers easily to reach, and make plain and visible to mankind, without some light from above to direct them. When truths are once known to us, though by tradition, we are apt to be favorable to our own parts, and ascribe to our own understandings the discovery of what, in reality, we borrowed from others; or, at least, finding we can prove what at first we learned from others, we are

forward to conclude it an obvious truth, which, if we had sought, we could not have missed. Nothing seems hard to our understandings that is once known : and because what we see, we see with our own eyes, we are apt to overlook or forget the help we had from others, who showed it us, and first made us see it ; as if we were not at all beholden to them for those truths they opened the way to, and led us into : for knowledge being only of truths that are perceived to be so, we are favorable enough to our own faculties to conclude that they, of their own strength, would have attained those discoveries without any foreign assistance ; and that we know those truths by the strength and native light of our own minds, as they did from whom we received them by theirs, only they had the luck to be before us. Thus the whole stock of human knowledge is claimed by every one as his private possession, as soon as he (profiting by others' discoveries,) has got it into his own mind : and so it is ; but not properly by his own single industry, nor of his own acquisition. He studies, it is true, and takes pains to make a progress in what others have delivered ; but their pains were of another sort, who first brought those truths to light, which he afterwards derives from them. He that travels the road now, applauds his own strength and legs that have carried him so far in such a scantling of time, and ascribes all to his own vigor, little considering how much he owes to their pains, who cleared the woods, drained the bogs, built the bridges, and made the ways passable ; without which he might have toiled much with little progress. A great many things which we have been bred up in the belief of, from our cradles, and are notions grown familiar, (and, as it were, natural to us, under the gospel,) we take for unquestionable obvious truths, and easily demonstrable ; without considering how long we might have been in doubt or ignorance of them, had revelation been silent. And many are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage too, to the truths revelation has discovered. But it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first certain knowledge of them from thence, and in that clear evidence we now possess of them. The contrary is manifest, in the defective morality of the Gentiles before our Saviour's time, and the want of reformation in the principles and measures of it, as well as practice. Philosophy seemed to have spent its strength, and done its utmost ; or if it should have gone further, as we see it did not, and from undeniable principles given us ethics in a science like mathematics, in every part demonstrable, this yet would not have been so effectual to man in this imperfect state, nor proper for the cure. The greatest part of mankind want leisure or capacity for demonstration, nor can carry a train of proofs, which in that way they must always depend upon for conviction, and cannot be required to assent to till they see the demonstration. Wherever they stick, the teachers are always put upon proof, and must clear the doubt, by a thread of coherent deductions from the first principle, how long, or how intricate soever that be. And you may as soon hope to have all the day-laborers and tradesmen, the spinsters and

dairy-maids, perfect mathematicians, as to have them perfect in ethics this way : hearing plain commands is the sure and only course to bring them to obedience and practice ; the greatest part cannot know, and therefore they must believe. And I ask, whether one coming from heaven in the power of God, in full and clear evidence and demonstration of miracles, giving plain and direct rules of morality and obedience, be not likelier to enlighten the bulk of mankind, and set them right in their duties, and bring them to do them, than by reasoning with them from general notions and principles of human reason ? And were all the duties of human life clearly demonstrated, yet I conclude, when well considered, that method of teaching men their duties would be thought proper only for a few, who had much leisure, improved understandings, and were used to abstract reasonings ; but the instruction of the people were best still to be left to the precepts and principles of the gospel. The healing of the sick, the restoring sight to the blind by a word, the raising, and being raised from the dead, are matters of fact, which they can without difficulty conceive ; and that he who does such things, must do them by the assistance of a divine power. These things lie level to the ordinarist apprehension ; he that can distinguish between sick and well, lame and sound, dead and alive, is capable of this doctrine. To one who is once persuaded that Jesus Christ was sent by God to be a king, and a Saviour of those who do believe in him, all his commands become principles ; there needs no other proof for the truth of what he says, but that he said it : and then there needs no more but to read the inspired books to be instructed ; all the duties of morality lie there clear and plain, and easy to be understood. And here I appeal, whether this be not the surest, the safest, and most effectual way of teaching ; especially if we add this further consideration, that as it suits the lowest capacities of reasonable creatures, so it reaches and satisfies, nay, enlightens the highest. The most elevated understandings cannot but submit to the authority of this doctrine as divine ; which coming from the mouths of a company of illiterate men, hath not only the attestation of miracles, but reason to confirm it, since they delivered no precepts but such as, though reason of itself had not clearly made out, yet it could not but assent to when thus discovered, and think itself indebted for the discovery. The credit and authority our Saviour and his apostles had over the minds of men, by the miracles they did, tempted them not to mix (as we find in that of all the sects of philosophers, and other religions) any conceits, any wrong rules, any thing tending to their own by-interest, or that of a party, in their morality : no tang of prepossession or fancy ; no footsteps of pride or vanity ; no touch of ostentation or ambition appears to have a hand in it : it is all pure, all sincere ; nothing too much, nothing wanting : but such a complete rule of life, as the wisest men must acknowledge, tends entirely to the good of mankind ; and that all would be happy, if all would practise it.

173. 3. The outward forms of worshipping the Deity wanted a reformation : stately buildings, costly ornaments, peculiar and uncouth habits,

and a numerous huddle of pompous, fantastical, cumbersome ceremonies, every where attended divine worship. This, as it had the peculiar name, so it was thought the principal part, if not the whole of religion; nor could this possibly be amended whilst the Jewish ritual stood, and there was so much of it mixed with the worship of the true God. To this also our Saviour, with the knowledge of the infinite, invisible, supreme Spirit, brought a remedy, in a plain, spiritual, and suitable worship. Jesus says to the woman of Samaria: "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: but the true worshippers, shall worship the Father both in Spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship." To be worshipped in spirit and in truth, with application of mind and sincerity of heart, was what God henceforth only required. Magnificent temples, and confinement to certain places, were now no longer necessary for his worship, which by a pure heart might be performed any where. The splendor and distinction of habits, and pomp of ceremonies and all outside performances, might now be spared. God, who was a spirit, and made known to be so, required none of those, but the spirit only; and that in public assemblies, (where some actions must lie open to the view of the world,) all that could appear and be seen, should be done decently, and in order, and to edification. Decency, order, and edification were to regulate all their public acts of worship; and beyond what these required, the outward appearance (which was of little value in the eyes of God) was not to go. Having shut out indecency and confusion out of their assemblies, they need not be solicitous about useless ceremonies: praises and prayer humbly offered up to the Deity, was the worship he now demanded; and in these every one was to look after his own heart, and know that it was that alone which God had regard to, and accepted.

174. 4. Another great advantage received by our Saviour, is the great encouragement he brought to a virtuous and a pious life; great enough to surmount the difficulties and obstacles that lie in the way to it, and reward the pains and hardships of those who stuck firm to their duties, and suffered for the testimony of a good conscience. The portion of the righteous has been in all ages taken notice of to be pretty scanty in this world: virtue and prosperity do not often accompany one another, and therefore virtue seldom had many followers; and it is no wonder she prevailed not much in a state, where the inconveniences that attended her were visible and at hand, and the rewards doubtful and at a distance. Mankind, who are and must be allowed to pursue their happiness, nay, cannot be hindered, could not but think themselves excused from a strict observation of rules, which appeared so little to consist with their chief end—happiness, whilst they kept them from the enjoyments of this life; and they had little evidence and security of another.* It is true, they

might have argued the other way, and concluded, that, because the good were most of them ill-treated here, there was another place where they should meet with better usage; but it is plain they did not. Their thoughts of another life were, at best, obscure, and their expectations uncertain. Of manes, and ghosts, and the shades of departed men, there was some talk; but little certain, and less minded. They had the names of Styx and Acheron, of Elysian Fields and seats of the blessed; but they had them generally from their poets, mixed with their fables, and so they looked more like the inventions of wit and ornaments of poetry than the serious persuasions of the grave and the sober. They came to them bundled up amongst their tales; and for tales they took them. And that which rendered them more suspected, and less useful to virtue, was, that the philosophers seldom set on their rules on men's minds and practices by consideration of another life. The chief of their arguments were from the excellency of virtue; and the highest they generally went, was the exalting of human nature, whose perfection lay in virtue. And if the priest at any time talked of the ghosts below, and a life after this, it was only to keep men to their superstitious and idolatrous rites, whereby the use of this doctrine was lost to the credulous multitude, and its belief to the quicker sighted, who suspected it presently of priestcraft. Before our Saviour's time, the doctrine of a future state, though it were not wholly hid, yet it was not clearly known in the world. It was an imperfect view of reason; or, perhaps, the decayed remains of an ancient tradition, which rather seemed to float on men's fancies, than sink deep into their hearts. It was something, they knew not what, between being and not being.—Something in man they imagined might escape the grave; but a perfect complete life of an eternal duration, after this, was what entered little into their thoughts, and less into their persuasions. And they were so far from being clear herein, that we see no nation of the world publicly professed it, and built upon it; no religion taught it; and it was no where made an article of faith and principle of religion till Jesus Christ came: of whom it is truly said, that he at his appearing "brought life and immortality to light." And that not only in the clear revelation of it, and in instances shown of men raised from the dead, but he has given us an unquestionable assurance and pledge of it in his own resurrection and ascension into heaven. How hath this one truth changed the nature of things in the world, and given the advantage to piety over all that could tempt or deter men from it! The philosophers, indeed, showed the beauty of virtue: they set her off so as drew men's eyes and approbation to her; but leaving her undowered, very few were willing to espouse her.—The generality could not refuse her their esteem and commendation, but still turned their backs on her, and forsook her, as a match not for their turn. But now there being put into the scales on her side, "an exceeding and immortal weight of glory,"

* This is unjust to the philosophers. The immortality of the soul was as firmly believed then as it is now; and the same virtues were supposed to secure happiness in a future state. With the knowledge

Locke possessed of antiquity, I can hardly conceive how he could write this passage, which is in contradiction with what remains to us of genuine ancient philosophy.—Ed.

interest is come about to her ; and virtue now is visibly the most enriching purchase and by much the best bargain. That she is the perfection and excellency of our nature ; that she is herself a reward, and will recommend our names to future ages, is not all that can now be said for her. It is not strange that the learned heathens satisfied not many with such airy commendations. It has another relish and efficacy to persuade men, that if they live well here, they shall be happy hereafter. Open their eyes upon the endless unspeakable joys of another life, and their hearts will find something solid and powerful to move them.*—The view of heaven and hell will cast a slight upon the short pleasures and pains of this present state, and give attractions and encouragements to virtue, which reason and interest, and the care of ourselves, cannot but allow and prefer. Upon this foundation, and upon this only, morality stands firm, and may defy all competition. This makes it more than a name, a substantial good, worth all our aims and endeavors ; and thus the gospel of Jesus Christ hath delivered it to us.

175. 5. To these I must add one advantage more we have by Jesus Christ, and that is, the promise of assistance. If we do what we can, he will give us his Spirit to help us to do what, and how we should. It will be idle for us, who know not how our own spirits move and act us, to ask in what manner the Spirit of God shall work upon us. The wisdom that accompanies that Spirit knows better than we how we are made, and how to work upon us. If a wise man knows how to prevail on his child, to bring him to what he desires, can we suspect that the Spirit and wisdom of God should fail in it, though we perceive or comprehend not the ways of his operation ? Christ has promised it, who is faithful and just, and we cannot doubt of the performance. It is not requisite, on this occasion, for the enhancing of this benefit, to enlarge on the frailty of minds, and weakness of our constitutions ; how liable to mistakes, how apt to go astray, and how easily to be turned out of the paths of virtue. If any one needs go beyond himself and the testimony of his own conscience in this point ; if he feels not his own errors and passions always tempting him, and often prevailing against the strict rules of his duty, he need but look abroad into any age of the world to be convinced. To a man under the difficulties of his nature, beset with temptations, and hedged in with prevailing custom, it is no small encouragement to set himself seriously on the courses of virtue, and practice of true religion, that he is, from a sure hand, and an almighty arm, promised assistance to support and carry him through.

176. There remains yet something to be said to

* In the Essay on the Human Understanding, however, he had said :—" Let a man be ever so well persuaded of the advantages of virtue, that it is as necessary to a man who has any great aims in this world, or hopes in the next, as food to life ; yet, till he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, till he feels an uneasiness in the want of it, his *will* will not be determined to any action in pursuit of this confessed greater good ; but any other uneasiness he feels in himself shall take place, and carry his will to other actions." Book ii. ch. 21. § 35.—Ed.

those who will be ready to object, if the belief of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, together with those concomitant articles of his resurrection, rule, and coming again to judge the world, be all the faith required as necessary to justification, to what purpose were the epistles written ; I say, if the belief of those many doctrines contained in them, be not also necessary to salvation ? And if what is there delivered, a Christian may believe or disbelieve, and yet nevertheless be a member of Christ's church, and one of the faithful ! To this I answer, that the epistles were written upon several occasions ; and he that will read them as he ought, must observe what it is in them is principally aimed at ; find what is the argument in hand, and how managed, if he will understand them right, and profit by them. The observing of this will best help us to the true meaning and mind of the writer ; for that is the truth which is to be received and believed, and not scattered sentences in a Scripture language, accommodated to our notions and prejudices. We must look into the drift of the discourse, observe the coherence and connection of the parts, and see how it is consistent with itself, and other parts of Scripture, if we will conceive it right. We must not cull out, as best suits our system, here and there a period or a verse, as if they were all distinct and independent aphorisms ; and make these the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, and necessary to salvation, unless God has made them so.—There be many truths in the Bible, which a good Christian may be wholly ignorant of, and so not believe, which, perhaps, some lay great stress on, and call fundamental articles, because they are the distinguishing points of their communion. The epistles, most of them, carry on a thread of argument, which in the style they are written, cannot every where be observed without great attention. And to consider the texts, as they stand and bear a part in that, is to view them in their due light, and the way to get the true sense of them. They were written to those who were in the faith, and true Christians already ; and so could not be designed to teach them the fundamental articles and points necessary to salvation ; the epistle to the Romans was written to all " that were at Rome, beloved of God, called to be the saints, whose faith was spoken of through the world," chapter i. 7, 8. To whom St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians was, he shows, chapter i. 2, 4, &c. : " Unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints ; with all them that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge : ever as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. So that ye come behind in no gift ; waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." And so likewise the second was, " To the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints in Achaia," chapter i. 1. His next is to the churches of Galatia.—That to the Ephesians was, " To the saints that were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." So likewise, " To the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse, who had faith in Christ

Jesus, and love to the saints." "To the church of the Thessalonians." "To Timothy, his son in the faith." "To Titus, his own son after the common faith." "To Philemon, his dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer." And the author to the Hebrews, calls those he writes to, "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," chapter iii. 1. From whence it is evident, that all those whom St. Paul wrote to, were brethren, saints, faithful in the church, and so Christians already, and therefore wanted not the fundamental articles of the Christian religion; without a belief of which they could not be saved: nor can it be supposed, that the sending of such fundamentals was the reason of the apostle's writing to any of them. To such also St. Peter writes, as is plain from the first chapter of each of his epistles. Nor is it hard to observe the like in St. James and St. John's epistles. And St. Jude directs his thus: "To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." The epistles therefore being all written to those who were already believers and Christians, the occasion and end of writing them could not be to instruct them in that which was necessary to make them Christians. This it is plain they knew and believed already; or else they could not have been Christians and believers. And they were written upon particular occasions; and without those occasions had not been written, and so cannot be thought necessary to salvation; though they resolving doubts, and reforming mistakes, are of great advantage to our knowledge and practice. I do not deny, but the great doctrines of the Christian faith are dropped here and there, and scattered up and down in most of them. But it is not in the epistles we are to learn what are the fundamental articles of faith, where they are promiscuously, and without distinction, mixed with other truths in discourses that were (though for edification indeed, yet) only occasional. We shall find and discern those great and necessary points best in the preaching of our Saviour and the apostles, to those who were yet strangers, and ignorant of the faith, to bring them in, and convert them to it. And what that was we have seen already, out of the history of the evangelists and the Acts; where they are plainly laid down, so that nobody can mistake them. The epistles to particular churches, besides the main argument of each of them (which was some present concernment of that particular church to which they severally were addressed) do in many places explain the fundamentals of the Christian religion; and that wisely, by proper accommodations to the apprehensions of those they were written to, the better to make them imbibe the Christian doctrine, and the more easily to comprehend the method, reasons, and grounds of the great work of salvation. Thus we see in the epistle to the Romans, adoption (a custom well known amongst those of Rome) is much made use of, to explain to them the grace and favor of God, in giving them eternal life; to help them to conceive how they became the children of God, and to assure them of a share in the kingdom of heaven, as heirs to an inheritance. Whereas the setting out, and confirming the Christian faith to the Hebrews, in the epistle to them, is by allusions and arguments, from the ceremonies, sacrifices, and econo-

my of the Jews, and reference to the records of the Old Testament. And as for the general epistles, they, we may see, regard the state and exigencies, and some peculiarities of those times.—These holy writers, inspired from above, wrote nothing but truth, and in most places very weighty truths to us now; for the expounding, clearing, and confirming of the Christian doctrine, and establishing those in it who had embraced it. But yet every sentence of theirs must not be taken up and looked on as a fundamental article, necessary to salvation; without an explicit belief whereof nobody could be a member of Christ's church here, nor be admitted into his eternal kingdom hereafter. If all, or most of the truths declared in the epistles, were to be received and believed as fundamental articles, what then became of those Christians who were fallen asleep (as St. Paul witnesses in his first epistle to the Corinthians, many were) before these things in the epistles were revealed to them? Most of the epistles not being written till above twenty years after our Saviour's ascension, and some after thirty.

177. But further, therefore, to those who will be ready to say, may those truths delivered in the epistles, which are not contained in the preaching of our Saviour and his apostles, and are therefore by this account not necessary to salvation, be believed or disbelieved without any danger? May a Christian safely question or doubt of them? To this I answer, that the law of faith, being a covenant of free grace, God alone can appoint what shall be necessarily believed by every one whom he will justify. What is the faith which he will accept and account for righteousness, depends wholly on his good pleasure; for it is of grace, and not of right, that this faith is accepted. And therefore he alone can set the measures of it; and what he has so appointed and declared is alone necessary. Nobody can add to these fundamental articles of faith, nor make any other necessary, but what God himself hath made and declared to be so. And what these are which God requires of those who will enter into, and receive the benefits of the new covenant, has already been shown. An explicit belief of these, is absolutely required of all those to whom the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, and salvation through his name proposed.

178. The other parts of divine revelation are objects of faith, and are so to be received. They are truths, whereof no one can be rejected; none that is once known to be such, may or ought to be disbelieved; for to acknowledge any proposition to be of divine revelation and authority, and yet to deny or disbelieve it, is to offend against this fundamental article and ground of faith, that God is true. But yet a great many of the truths revealed in the gospel, every one does, and must confess a man may be ignorant of, nay, disbelieve, without danger to his salvation; as is evident in those who, allowing the authority, differ in the interpretation and meaning of several texts of Scripture, not thought fundamental: in all which it is plain the contending parties, on one side or the other, are ignorant of, nay, disbelieve the truths delivered in Holy Writ, unless contrarieties and contradictions can be contained in the same words, and divine revelation can mean contrary to itself.

179. Though all divine revelation requires the obedience of faith, yet every truth of inspired Scriptures is not one of those, that by the law of faith is required to be explicitly believed to justification. What those are we have seen by what our Saviour and his apostles proposed to and required in those whom they converted to the faith. Those are fundamentals, which it is not enough not to disbelieve, every one is required actually to assent to them. But any other proposition contained in the Scripture, which God has not thus made a necessary part of the law of faith (without an actual assent to which he will not allow any one to be a believer,) a man may be ignorant of, without hazarding his salvation by a defect in his faith. He believes all that God has made necessary for him to believe and assent to; and as for the rest of divine truths, there is nothing more required of him, but that he receive all the parts of divine revelation, with a docility and disposition prepared to embrace, and assent to all truths coming from God, and submit his mind to whatsoever shall appear to him to bear that character. Where he, upon fair endeavors understands it not, how can he avoid being ignorant? And where he cannot put several texts, and make them consist together, what remedy? He must either interpret one by the other, or suspend his opinion. He that thinks that more is, or can be required, of poor frail man in matters of faith, will do well to consider what absurdities he will run into. God, out of the infiniteness of his mercy, has dealt with man as a compassionate and tender father. He gave him reason and with it a law, that could not be otherwise than what reason should dictate, unless we should think that a reasonable creature should have an unreasonable law. But considering the frailty of man, apt to run into corruption and misery, he promised a deliverer, whom in his good time he sent; and then declared to all mankind, that whoever would believe him to be the Saviour promised, and take him now raised from the dead, and constituted the Lord and Judge of all men, to be their king and ruler, should be saved. This is a plain intelligible proposition; and the all-merciful God seems herein to have consulted the poor of this world, and the bulk of mankind. These are articles that the laboring and illiterate man may comprehend. This is a religion suited to vulgar capacities, and the state of mankind in this world, destined to labor and travail. The writers and wranglers in religion fill it with niceties, and dress it up with notions, which they make necessary and fundamental parts of it; as if there were no way into the church but through the Academy or Lycæum.

The greatest part of mankind have not leisure for learning and logic, and superfine distinctions of the schools. Where the hand is used to the plough and the spade, the head is seldom elevated to sublime notions, or exercised in mysterious reasonings. It is well if men of that rank (to say nothing of the other sex) can comprehend plain propositions, and a short reasoning about things familiar to their minds, and nearly allied to their daily experience. Go beyond this, and you amaze the greatest part of mankind; and may as well talk Arabic to a poor day-laborer, as the notions and language that the books and disputes of religion are filled with, and as soon you will be understood. The dissenting congregations are supposed by their teachers to be more accurately instructed in matters of faith, and better to understand the Christian religion, than the vulgar conformists, who are charged with great ignorance; how truly I will not here determine. But I ask them to tell me seriously, whether half their people have leisure to study? Nay, whether one in ten of those who come to their meetings in the country, if they had time to study, do or can understand the controversies at this time so warmly managed amongst them, about justification, the subject of this present treatise? I have talked with some of their teachers, who confess themselves not to understand the difference in debate between them; and yet the points they stand on, are reckoned of so great weight, so material, so fundamental in religion, that they divide communion and separate upon them. Had God intended that none but the learned scribe, the disputer or wise of this world, should be Christians, or be saved; thus religion should have been prepared for them, filled with speculations and niceties, obscure terms, and abstract notions. But men of that expectation, men furnished with such acquisitions, the apostle tells us,* are rather shut out from the simplicity of the gospel, to make way for those poor, ignorant, illiterate, who heard and believed the promises of a deliverer, and believed Jesus to be him; who could conceive a man dead and made alive again, and, believe that he should, at the end of the world, come again, and pass sentence on all men, according to their deeds. That the poor had the gospel preached to them, Christ makes a mark as well as business, of his mission:† and, if the poor had the gospel preached to them, it was, without doubt, such a gospel as the poor could understand—plain and intelligible: and so it was, as we have seen, in the preachings of Christ and his apostles.

* Cor. i.

† Matt. xi. 5.

APPENDIX.

THE "Reasonableness of Christianity, as delivered in the Scriptures," had not long appeared, before it was attacked by the Rev. Mr. Edwards, in a work entitled "Some Thoughts on the Causes and Occasions of Atheism, especially in the present Age." Locke would, perhaps, have acted more wisely had he altogether declined entering into a controversy; or, like Newton, committed the defence of his doctrines to his friends. But such indifference was inconsistent with his character. He accordingly, in a "Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity," replied to the charges which had been brought against him, and by farther developments and illustrations of his opinions, sought to guard them against future misrepresentations. His antagonist, however, was too much flattered by being regarded as the opponent of so great a man, readily to relinquish such an advantage; and therefore continued his animadversions in a more taunting and indecent style, in his "Socinianism Unmasked," and "Socinian Creed." He was one of those polemics who mistake abusive language for argument, and cannot sufficiently show their zeal without entirely emancipating themselves from the restraint of good breeding and civility. He could think of no terms too opprobrious to be heaped upon Locke. The spirit of Christianity he altogether lost sight of, while contending for his own interpretation of some of its mysteries; and we wish we could with truth and candor say, that the author of the "Essay on the Human Understanding" had, on this occasion left posterity a better example. It is, indeed, greatly to be regretted that neither the suggestions of philosophy, nor the example of him who, when railed at, railed not again, should have kept Locke, in his Second Vindication, within the limits of politeness and Christian charity. His superior understanding, which enabled him, both in speculation and practice, to discern what was right, might certainly have been expected to prove a safeguard against this besetting sin of controversialists. Even paganism affords patterns of such forbearance. Socrates, when attacked by the Sophists, who, at the same time, were laboring to undermine all law, justice, and religion, exhibited neither bitterness nor anger. He listened to the most galling accusations with calmness. He smilingly submitted to revilings and taunts: and, as we learn from the Gorgias,—the most admirable model, perhaps, existing, of the manner in which controversy should be conducted,—when brought into personal contact with his opponents, and sought to be irritated by insolent assumption of superiority and affected disdain, defended himself, like a perfect gentleman, with the weapons of calm reason and irony. But Locke was by nature passionate, and vented his anger in language unbecoming his character and his cause. For this

reason, were not their prolixity a sufficient objection, we should scruple to append the two Vindications to the "Reasonableness of Christianity," though we shall endeavor, by the help of extracts, to convey some idea of the objections and replies.

Mr. Edwards, with reckless disregard of all that is due from one Christian to another, charges Locke with being an Atheist,* or a favorer of Atheism, or a Socinian, which in his view of the matter, is much the same thing; and, to show how lightly he deals about his accusations, places in the same category, Jeremy Taylor and the author of the "Naked Truth." By what rules of logic he identifies Socinianism with Atheism is left to the acumen of the ingenious reader; but in the charge of Socinianism he is positive, and thus he maintains it:—"When he (Locke) proceeds to mention the advantages and benefits of Christ's coming into the world, and appearing in the flesh, he hath not one syllable of his satisfying for us, or by his death purchasing life or salvation, or any thing that sounds like it. This and several other things show that he is all over Socinianized."

In reply to this, Locke adduces, from his book, the following passages:—"From this estate of death Jesus Christ restores all mankind to life;" and a little farther, "The life which Jesus Christ restores to all men;" and, again, "He that hath incurred death for his own transgressions, cannot lay down his life for another, as our Saviour promises he did." He then proceeds:—"But what will become of me, that I have not mentioned satisfaction! . . . Possibly this reverend gentleman would have had charity enough for a known writer of the brotherhood, to have found it by an innuendo in those words above quoted, of laying down his life for another. . . . But what if the author designed his treatise, as the title shows, chiefly for those who were not yet thoroughly or firmly Christians; proposing to work on those who either wholly disbelieved, or doubted of the truth

* Dr. Knox, with many others, classes Locke among the most celebrated defenders of Christianity, though he does not think much good has been derived from any works of this kind:—"Let those," says he, "who think the dry argumentative apologies irresistibly convincing, now bring them forward, and silence the gainsayers at once. The Demonstrations of a Huet; the Evidences of a Clarke; the Reasonings of a Locke, a Grotius, a Hartley, should be presented in the most striking manner, by public authority; and if they are really efficacious in producing conviction, we may be assured that infidelity will vanish at their appearance, like the mists of an autumnal morning, when the meridian sun breaks forth in full splendor. But the truth is, they are already very much diffused; and yet the Christian religion is said to be rapidly on the decline."—Christian Philosophy, p. 11, 12.

of the Christian religion. Would any one blame his prudence, if he mentioned only those advantages which all Christians are agreed in? Might he not remember and observe that command of the apostle, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations,"* without being a Socinian? Did he amiss, that he offered to the belief of those who stood off, that, and only that, which our Saviour and his apostles preached for the reducing of the unconverted world? and would any one think he in earnest went about to persuade men to be Christians, who should use that as an argument to recommend the gospel, which he has observed men to lay hold on as an objection against it? To urge such points of controversy as necessary articles of faith, when we see our Saviour and the apostles urged them not as necessary to be believed to make men Christians, is, by our own authority, to add prejudices to prejudices, and to block up our own way to those men whom we would have access to, and prevail upon."

Another charge made by Mr. Edwards against Locke, was his forgetting, or rather wilfully omitting, some plain and obvious passages, and famous testimonies in the evangelists; namely, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;"† and, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" and, again, in the same chapter: "And the Word was made flesh."‡ In his reply to this point, Locke observes that, apparently, all the sins in his book were sins of omission; though the outcry which had been raised, on its first publication, might well have persuaded the world it was designed to subvert all morality and religion. However, if omitting "plain and obvious passages," were to be considered a fault, he expresses his surprise that, since his omissions of this kind were innumerable, so very few should have been objected to him. "But," continues he, "if I have left out none of those passages or testimonies which contain what our Saviour and his apostles preached, and required assent to, to make men believers, I shall think my omissions, let them be what they will, no faults in the present case. Whatever doctrines Mr. Edwards would have to be believed, if they are such as our Saviour and his apostles required to be believed to make a man a Christian, he will be sure to find them in those preachings and "famous testimonies" of our Saviour and his apostles, that I have quoted; and if they are not there he may rest satisfied they were not proposed by our Saviour and his apostles as necessary to be believed, to make men Christ's disciples."

He then proceeds to animadvert on Mr. Edwards' remissness, in not reprehending him, after his usual manner, for omitting other texts of Scripture, no less true, and no less to be believed, than the "famous testimonies" above mentioned; particularly those texts in Matthew and Mark, on which are founded the following articles of the Apostles' Creed; viz., that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried. "These," says he, "being articles of the Apostles' Creed, are looked upon as 'fundamental doctrines;' and one would

wonder why Mr. Edwards so quietly passes by their omission, did it not appear that he was so intent on fixing his imputation of Socinianism upon me, that rather than miss that, he was content to drop the other articles of his creed. For I must observe to him, that if he had blamed me for the omission of the places last quoted out of St. Matthew, as he had as much reason as for any other, it would plainly have appeared how idle and ill-grounded his charging Socinianism on me was. But, at any rate, he was to give the book an ill name; not because it was Socinian; for he has no more reason to charge it with Socinianism for the omission he mentions, than the Apostles' Creed."

Here our philosopher imagined himself upon strong ground. But he was mistaken. For Mr. Edwards, who, like an able controversialist, could strengthen his arguments with sneers and ridicule, takes a short method with the Apostles' Creed. First, however, he indulges himself in a sarcasm or two at his adversary:—"This author of the *New Christianity*,"* says he, "*wisely* objects that the Apostles' Creed hath none of those articles which I mention." Here with equal dexterity, Locke pretends to understand the word "*wisely*" in its literal acception, though it is used ironically for "foolishly;" and gravely answers: "If that author *wisely* objects, the Unmasker would have done well to have replied *wisely*. But for a man *wisely* to reply, it is in the first place requisite that the objection be truly and fairly set down in its full force, and not represented short, and as will best serve the answerer's turn to reply to. This is neither wise nor honest: and this first part of a *wise* reply the Unmasker has failed in."

He then once more shelters himself behind the Apostles' Creed; upon which Mr. Edwards observes:—"Nor does any considerate man wonder at it;"—that is, that the creed should contain none of those articles and doctrines he had mentioned; for the creed is a form of outward profession, which is chiefly to be made in the public assemblies, when prayers are put up in the church, and the holy Scriptures are read. Then this abridgment of faith is properly used, or when there is not time or opportunity to make any enlargement. But we are not to think it expressly contains in it all the necessary and weighty points, all the important doctrines of belief; it being only designed to be an abstract."

Here he commits himself, and Locke is not slow to take advantage of it. "Another indispensable requisite," says he, "in a *wise* reply, (the sneer at his wisdom had evidently galled him,) is, that it should be pertinent. Now what can there be more impertinent, than to confess the matter of fact upon which the objection is grounded; but, instead of destroying the inference drawn from that matter of fact, only amuse the reader with wrong reasons, why that matter of fact was so? 'No, considerate man,' he says, 'doth wonder' that the articles and doctrines he mentioned are

* Rom. xiv. 1. † Matt. xxviii. 19. ‡ John, i. 1, 14.

* To this charge of novelty, or of new-modeling Christianity, Locke replies:—"This new Christianity is as old as the preaching of our Saviour and his apostles, and a little older than our Unmasker's system."—Second Vindication, p. 136.

omitted in the Apostles' Creed: because that creed is a form of outward profession.—A profession of what, I beseech you? Is it a form to be used for form's sake? I thought it had been a profession of something—even of the Christian faith: and if it be so, any considerate man *may* wonder necessary articles of the Christian faith should be left out of it. For, how it can be an outward profession of the Christian faith, without containing the Christian faith, I do not see; unless a man can outwardly profess the Christian faith in words that do not contain or express it; that is, profess the Christian faith when he does not profess it. But he says, 'tis a profession chiefly to be made use of in assemblies.' Do those solemn assemblies privilege it from containing the necessary articles of the Christian religion? This proves not that it does not, or was not, designed to contain all articles necessary to be believed to make a man a Christian; unless the Unmasker can prove that a form of outward profession of the Christian faith, that contains all such necessary articles, cannot be made use of in public assemblies."

When Mr. Edwards wrote his opinion of the Apostles' Creed, he probably did not sufficiently consider either his own words, or the logical acuteness, and patient diligence of Locke; did not foresee that he was not to be silenced by railing, or satisfied with explanations so loose and imperfect. "In the public assemblies," says he, "when prayers are put up by the church, and the holy Scriptures are read, then this abridgment of faith is properly used; or when there is not generally time or opportunity to make an enlargement."

Upon this his adversary remarks:—"But that which contains not what is absolutely necessary to be believed to make a man a Christian, can no where be properly used as 'a form of outward profession' of the Christian faith, and least of all in the solemn public assemblies. All the sense I can make of this is, that this abridgment of the Christian faith; that is, imperfect collection, as the Unmasker will have it, of some of the fundamental articles of Christianity, in the Apostles' Creed, which omits the greatest part of them, is made use of as a form of outward profession of but a part of the Christian faith, in the public assemblies; when, by reason of reading the Scriptures and prayers, there is not time or opportunity for a full and perfect profession of it.

"'Tis strange the Christian church," he continues, "should not find time or opportunity, in sixteen hundred years, to make, in any of her public assemblies, a profession of so much of her faith as is necessary to make a man a Christian. But, pray tell me, has the church any such full and complete form of faith; that hath in it all those propositions you have given us for necessary articles, not to say any thing of those which you have reserved to yourself in your own breast, and will not communicate—of which the Apostles' Creed is only a scanty form, a brief imperfect abstract; used only to save time in the crowd of other pressing occasions, that are always in haste to be despatched? If she has, the Unmasker will do well to produce it. If the church has no such complete form, besides the Apostles' Creed, any

where, of fundamental articles, he will do well to leave talking idly of this 'abstract,' as he goes on to do in the following words:—"But we are not to think that it expressly contains in it all the necessary and weighty points, all the important doctrines of our belief; it being only designed to be an abstract.' Of what, I beseech you, is it an abstract? For here the Unmasker stops short; and as one that knows not well what to say, speaks not out what it is an abstract of; but provides himself a subterfuge in the generality of the preceding terms, of 'necessary and weighty points,' and 'important doctrines,' jumbled together; which can be there of no other use but to cover his ignorance or sophistry. But the question being only about necessary points, to what purpose are 'weighty and important doctrines' joined to them; unless he will say, that there is no difference between 'necessary' and 'weighty points,' fundamental and 'important doctrines?' And if so, then the distinction of points into necessary and not necessary will be foolish and impertinent: and all the doctrines contained in the Bible will be absolutely necessary to be explicitly believed by every man to make him a Christian. But taking it for granted, that the distinction of truths contained in the gospel into points absolutely necessary, and not absolutely necessary to be believed to make a man a Christian, is good; I desire the Unmasker to tell us, what the Apostles' Creed is an abstract of. He will, perhaps, answer, that he has told us already, in this very page, where he says it is an 'abridgment of faith;' and he has said true in words, but saying those words by rote after others, without understanding them, he has said so in a sense that is not true. For he supposes it an 'abridgment of faith' by containing only a few of the necessary articles of faith, and leaving out the far greater part of them; and so takes a part of a thing for an abridgment of it; whereas an abridgment or abstract of any thing is the whole in little: and if it be of a science or doctrine, the abridgment consists in the essential or necessary parts of it, contracted into a narrower compass than where it lies diffused in the ordinary way of delivery, amongst a great number of transitions, explanations, illustrations, proofs, reasonings, corollaries, &c. All which, though they make a part of the discourse wherein that doctrine is delivered, are left out in the abridgment of it, wherein all the necessary parts of it are drawn together into less room. But though an abridgment need to contain none but the essential and necessary parts, yet all those it ought to contain; or else it will not be an abridgment or abstract of that thing, but an abridgment only of a part of it."*

* Knot, the Jesuit, in his controversy with Chillingworth, had made much the same observation on the Apostles' Creed, to which the great logician thus replies:—"You trifle affectedly, confounding the apostles' belief of the whole religion of Christ, as it comprehends both what we are to do, and what we are to believe, with that part of it which contains not duties of obedience, but only the necessary articles of simple faith. Now, though the apostles' belief be, in the former sense, a larger thing than that which we call the Apostles' Creed; yet in the latter sense of the word, the creed (I say) is a full

But, as he proceeds, Mr. Edwards discovers that the Apostles' Creed is not really an abridgment of the Christian faith; for "if a man believe no more," says he, "than is in express terms in the Apostles' Creed, his faith will not be the faith of a Christian." Locke, as was to be expected, rejoices at the declaration made in this passage, "wherein he does great honor," says he, "to the primitive church, and particularly to the church of England. The primitive church admitted converted heathens to baptism, upon the faith contained in the Apostles' Creed: a bare profession of that faith, and no more, was required of them to be received into the church, and made members of Christ's body. How little different the faith of the ancient church was from the faith I have mentioned, may be seen in these words of Tertullian:—*Regula fidei nostri una omnino, est, sola, immobilis, irreformabilis; credendi scilicet in unicum Deum omnipotentem mundi conditorem, et Filium ejus Jesum Christum, natum ex Virgine Maria, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, tertia die resuscitatum à mortuis, receptum in cœlis, sedentem nunc ad dextram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos, per carnis etiam resurrectionem. Hæc lege fidei manente, cætera jam disciplinæ et conversationis admittunt novitatem correctionis.*"

"This was the faith that, in Tertullian's time, sufficed to make a Christian. And the church of England, as I have remarked already, only proposes the articles of the Apostles' Creed to the convert to be baptized; and upon his professing a belief of them, asks whether he will be baptized in this faith, which, if we will believe the Unmasker, is not the faith of a Christian. However, the church, without any more ado, upon the profession of this faith, and no other, baptizes him into it. So that the ancient church, if the Unmasker may be believed, baptized converts into that faith which is not the faith of a Christian; and the church of England, when she baptizes any one, makes him not a Christian."

Jeremy Taylor, in his "Liberty of Prophesying," takes precisely the same view of the question. He commences by giving an outline of the history of the creed, which is supposed to have been written by the apostles, or by holy men, their contemporaries, and designed to be a rule of faith to all Christians, as appears from Irenæus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Austin, Rufinus, and, in short, all the orthodox fathers. "And, unless it had com-

prehension of their belief, which you yourself have formerly confessed, though somewhat fearfully and inconstantly. And here, again, unwillingness to speak the truth, makes you speak that which is hardly sense, and call it an 'abridgment of some articles of faith.' For I demand those some articles which you speak of—which are they? Those that are out of the creed, or those that are in it? Those that are in it, it comprehends at large; and therefore it is not an abridgment of them. Those that are out of it, it comprehends not at all; and therefore it is not an abridgment of them. If you would call it now an abridgment of faith, this would be sense; and signify thus much, that all the necessary articles of the Christian faith are comprised in it. For this is the proper duty of abridgments, to leave out nothing necessary."

tained all the entire objects of faith, and the foundation of religion, it cannot be imagined (says he) to what purpose it should serve: and that it was so esteemed by the whole church of God in all ages, appears in this, that since faith is a necessary predisposition to baptism, in all persons capable of the use of reason, all catechumens in the Latin church, coming to baptism, were interrogated concerning their faith, and gave satisfaction in the recitation of this creed." A little further on, as if anticipating the objections of Mr. Edwards, he observes:—"Since it is necessary to rest somewhere, lest we should run to an infinity, it is best to rest there where the apostles and the churches apostolically rested; when not only they who are able to judge, but others who are not, are equally ascertained of the certainty and of the sufficiency of that explication. This, I say, not that I believe it unlawful or unsafe for the church, or any of the ecclesiastical rulers, or any wise man to extend his own creed to any thing which may certainly follow from any one of the articles; but I say that no such deduction is fit to be pressed on others as an article of faith; and that every deduction which is so made, unless it is such a thing as is at first evident to all, is but sufficient to make a human faith, nor can it amount to a divine, much less can be obligatory to bind a person of differing persuasion to subscribe, under pain of losing his faith, or being a heretic."*

Provided, therefore, Locke considered the Apostles' Creed to be the symbol of his faith, and subscribed to all the articles it contained, he was an orthodox Christian. But his antagonist, unwilling, on any condition, to receive a philosopher into brotherly fellowship, waving his objections against the sufficiency of the creed, asserted that he did not believe even so much. "I crave leave to tell him," says he, "that the Apostles' Creed hath more in it than he or his brethren will subscribe to." Here, then, the question is brought to a point. Did Locke believe the creed or not? Mr. Edwards affirms the negative; and if Mr. Edwards is right, Locke was not a Christian. But let us hear the accused in his own defence:—"Were it not the undoubted privilege of the Unmasker to know me better than I do myself, for he is always telling me something of myself which I did not know, I would, in my turn, crave leave to tell him, that this is the faith I was baptized into, no one title whereof I have renounced, that I know; and I heretofore thought that gave me title to be a Christian." This is decisive: Locke was a believer, unless we can suppose him to have solemnly affirmed an untruth; a supposition which would do little credit to our Christian charity.

In the "Reasonableness of Christianity" Locke has chiefly supported his views with texts from those portions of the New Testament which record the discourses of our Saviour and his apostles; and for this proceeding his reason was, that the fundamental articles of our faith are in the epistles promiscuously, and without distinction, mixed with other truths. But Mr. Edwards's ingenuity immediately suggests another reason. Locke, he continually maintains, was desirous of reducing the number of necessary articles of faith, and there-

* Liberty of Prophesying, p. 11, 18.

fore purposely omitted the epistolary writings of the apostles, because they are fraught with other fundamental doctrines besides the one he argues for. He then enumerates these fundamental articles, viz.: 1. The corruption and degeneracy of human nature, with the true origin of it—the defection of our first parents. 2. The propagation of sin and mortality. 3. Our restoration and reconciliation by Christ's blood. 4. The eminency and excellency of his priesthood. 5. The efficacy of his death. 6. The full satisfaction made thereby to divine justice. 7. His being an all-sufficient sacrifice for sin. 8. Christ's righteousness. 9. Our justification by it. 10. Election. 11. Adoption. 12. Sanctification. 13. Saving faith. 14. The nature of the gospel. 15. The new covenant. 16. The riches of God's mercy in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. 17. The certainty of the resurrection of our bodies, and of the future glory.

In his "First Vindication" Locke replies seriously, and at length, to the accusation of his adversary; and inquires whether every one of these "fundamental doctrines" is required to be believed to make a man a Christian, and such as without the actual belief thereof, he cannot be saved. If so, small indeed would be the number of the elect; no ignorant man could possibly be saved; for none but learned theologists could even comprehend the terms of the several propositions; and no man, perhaps, could form, on all these points, an opinion that should be perfectly free from error. But let him explain his own views:—"If they are not necessary, every one of them, you may call them fundamental doctrines as much as you please, they are not of those doctrines of faith I was speaking of, which are only such as are required to be actually believed to make a man a Christian. If you say, some of them are such necessary points of faith, and others not, you, by this specious list of well sounding, but unexplained terms, arbitrarily collected, only make good what I have said, viz.: that the necessary articles of faith are in the epistles promiscuously delivered with other truths, and therefore they cannot be distinguished but by some other mark than being barely found in the epistles. If you say that they are all of them necessary articles of faith, I shall then desire you to reduce them to so many plain doctrines, and then prove them required to be believed by every Christian man to make him a member of the Christian church."

In the "Second Vindication" he thus pursues the same argument:—"Can there be any thing more absurd than to say there are several fundamental articles, each of which every man must explicitly believe, upon pain of damnation, and yet not be able to say which they be? The Unmasker has set down no small number; but yet dares not say, 'These are all.' On the contrary, he has plainly confessed there are more; but will not, that is, cannot tell what they are that remain behind; nay, has given a general description of his fundamental articles, by which it is not evident but there may be ten times as many as those he has named; and amongst them, if he durst or could name them, probably several, that many a good Christian, who died in the faith, and is now in heaven, never once thought of; and others, which many, of as good authority as he, would, from their different systems, certainly deny and contradict."

We shall conclude our account of this part of the controversy with the following passage from the "First Vindication." The list of materials for his creed—for the articles are not yet formed—Mr. Edwards closes with these words:—"These are the matters of faith contained in the epistles, and they are essential and integral parts of the gospel itself." What, just these? Neither more nor less? If you are sure of it, pray let us have them speedily, for the reconciling of differences in the Christian church, which has been so cruelly torn about the articles of the Christian faith, to the great reproach of Christian charity, and scandal of our true religion."

At length Mr. Edwards, setting aside all minor considerations, comes at once to the doctrine of the Trinity, and affirms that, because this doctrine is discoverable in them, they were passed over with contempt by Locke. His words are:—"He doth this,—that is, pass by the epistles with contempt—because he knew that there are so many and frequent, and those so illustrious and eminent attestations to the doctrine of the ever-to-be-adored Trinity, in these epistles." He adds, that Locke expounds John, xiv. 9., &c., after the antitrinitarian mode; and makes Christ and Adam to be sons of God in the same sense, and by their birth. Stillingfleet, who also urged this point of the Trinity, in his controversy with our philosopher, received no answer; but, in a letter to his relation, afterwards Lord Chancellor King, he says:—"If those gentlemen think that the bishop hath the advantage by not making good one of those many propositions in debate between us, but by asking a question, a personal question, nothing to the purpose, I shall not envy him such a victory. In the meantime, if this be all they have to say, the world, that sees not with their eyes, will see what disputants for truth those are, who make to themselves occasions of calumny, and think that a triumph. The Bishop is to prove, that my book has something in it that is inconsistent with the doctrine of the Trinity; and all that upon examination he does, is to ask me whether I believe the doctrine of the Trinity as it has been received in the Christian church? A worthy proof!"

This is all we have observed in his bearing directly upon this point. With respect to the sense in which he supposes the phrase, "Son of God," to be employed in the Scriptures, he is sufficiently explicit. In his "First Vindication," he says:—"If the sense wherein I understand those texts (John, xiv. 9., &c.) be a mistake, I shall be beholden to you if you will set me right. But they are not popular authorities, or frightful names, whereby I judge of truth or falsehood. You will now, no doubt, applaud your conjectures: the point is gained, and I am openly a Socinian, since I will not disown that I think the 'Son of God' was a phrase that among the Jews in our Saviour's time, was used for the 'Messiah,' though the Socinians understand it in the same sense; and therefore I must certainly be of their persuasion in every thing else. I admire the acuteness, force, and fairness of your reasoning, and so I leave you to triumph in your conjectures. Only I must desire you to take notice, that that ornament of our church, and every way eminent prelate, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, understood that phrase

in the same sense that I do, without being a Socinian. You may read what he says concerning Nathaniel, in his first sermon, 'Of Sincerity,' published this year. His words are these:—"And being satisfied that he—our Saviour—was the Messiah, he presently owned him for such, calling him the Son of God, and the King of Israel."

Locke afterwards found in Patrick, Bishop of Ely's "Witnesses to Christianity," several passages in support of his interpretation of the phrase, "Son of God." If, therefore, Mr. Edwards persisted in calling him a Socinian, to be consistent, he must bestow the same epithet on Bishop Patrick, who says, "To be the Son of God, and to be Christ, being but different expressions of the same thing;" and, "It is the very same thing to believe that Jesus is the Christ, and to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, express it how you please. This alone is the faith which can regenerate a man, and put a divine spirit into him; that is, make him a conqueror over the world, as Jesus was."*

This leads us to the principal subject of the controversy. Locke having laid down, as the great basis of Christianity, the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, to prove which is the object of his whole treatise on the Christian religion, Mr. Edwards accuses him of reducing Christianity to one article, in order to bring it nearer to none. This might, at the first blush, have caused it to appear that Locke desired to exclude the belief in the existence of a God, which was manifestly untrue. To excuse himself, therefore, for dwelling so jocularly on the "one article," the Unmasker says:—"When I told him of this one article, he knew well enough that I did not exclude the article of the Deity, for that is a principle of natural religion." To this the philosopher answers:—"How should I know it? He never told me so, either in his book or otherwise. This I know, that he said I contended for 'one article, with the exclusion of all the rest.' If then the belief of the Deity be an article of faith, and be not the article of Jesus being the Messiah, it is one 'of the rest;' and if all the rest were excluded, certainly that being one of all the rest, must be excluded. How then he could say, I knew that he excluded it not,—that is, meant not that I excluded it,—when he positively says I did exclude it, I cannot tell, unless he thought that I knew him so well, that when he said one thing, I knew that he meant another, and that the quite contrary."

Having given a list, which has already been cited, of fundamental truths, Mr. Edwards observes: "From what I have said, it is evident, that the Vindicator is grossly mistaken, when he saith, 'Whatever doctrine the apostles required to be believed to make a man a Christian,' are to be found in those places of Scripture which he has quoted in his book. I think I have sufficiently proved that there are other doctrines besides that, which are required to be believed to make a man a Christian."

In answer to this, Locke insists that all his adversary might advance would signify nothing, unless he could prove "that what our Saviour and

his apostles preached, and admitted men into the church for believing, is not all that is absolutely required to make a man a Christian; or, that the believing him to be the Messiah was not the only article they insisted on, to those who acknowledged one God; and upon the belief whereof they admitted converts into the church, in any one of those many places quoted by me out of the history of the New Testament." He then proceeds to show that if those admitted into the church by our Saviour and his apostles, were admitted without having any other article explicitly laid before them, the belief of no other article is necessary. "Unless," says he, "you will say that our Saviour and his apostles admitted men into the church that were not qualified with such a faith as was absolutely necessary to make a man a Christian; which is as much as to say, that they allowed and pronounced men to be Christians, who were not Christians. For he that wants what is necessary to make a man a Christian, can no more be a Christian than he that wants what is necessary to make him a man can be a man."

In the "Reasonableness of Christianity" Locke is methodical, clear, concise. He encumbers not his argument with unnecessary illustrations, nor does he carry forward his analysis beyond the limits which a severe judgment may approve. In the "Second Vindication" the reverse of all this is true. He appears to have ill digested his plan; not to have considered where he should begin, or where end; he pauses, and exhausts his own ingenuity, and the reader's patience, in refuting some pitiful cavil, in repelling scorn with scorn; and loses himself in a maze of endless repetitions. It must, moreover, be acknowledged, that through many a dreary page we look in vain for any trace of that superior mind which gave birth to the "Essay on the Human Understanding," the "Letters on Toleration," and the "Treatise on Government;" and though some striking passages do occur, they are few, and hardly compensate for the drudgery which must lead to their discovery. The following outline, however, of the whole scheme of natural and revealed religion is worthy of being preserved.

"As men," he observes, "we have God for our King, and are under the law of reason: as Christians, we have Jesus the Messiah for our King, and are under the law revealed by him in the gospel. And though every Christian, both as a Deist and a Christian, be obliged to study both the law of nature and the revealed law, that in them he may know the will of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; yet in neither of these laws is there to be found a select set of fundamentals, distinct from the rest, which are to make a Deist or a Christian. But he that believes one eternal invisible God, his Lord and King, ceases thereby to be an Atheist; and he that believes Jesus to be the Messiah, his King, ordained by God, thereby becomes a Christian, is delivered from the power of darkness, and is translated into the kingdom of the Son of God, is actually within the covenant of grace, and has that faith which shall be imputed to him for righteousness; and if he continue in his allegiance to this his king, shall receive the reward—eternal life."

He then deprecates the practice, too common

* Witnesses to Christianity, p. 10, 14.

among theologians, of erecting individual views of religion into systems, and endeavoring to force them upon mankind; nearly every proposition in the Scriptures, with every deduction that may be drawn from it, having been, by some one or another, advanced as a necessary article of faith. "Tis no wonder, therefore," he observes, "there have been such fierce contests, and such cruel havoc made amongst Christians, about fundamentals; whilst every one would set up his system, upon pain of fire and faggot in this, and hell-fire in the other world: though at the same time, whilst he is exercising the utmost barbarities against others, to prove himself a true Christian, he professes himself so ignorant that he cannot tell, or so uncharitable that he will not tell, what articles are absolutely necessary and sufficient to make a man a Christian. If there be any such fundamentals, as it is certain there are, it is as certain they must be very plain."

Against the idea of Christianity's being plain, and reasonable, and intelligible, Mr. Edwards takes violent exception. He thinks it absurd that the vulgar should be supposed capable of comprehending all the truths of their religion; though, at the same time, he insists there is nothing in the Scriptures not necessary to be believed; and, as it seems somewhat harsh to require a man to believe that of which he can form no idea, he, upon second thoughts, but without perceiving he is conceding a point to Locke, admits that the truths of the gospel are as clear as clearness can make them.

Let us put all these propositions together in Mr. Edwards' own words, to show upon what a logical system he reasons. "Christianity is called a mystery. . . . All things in Christianity are not plain, and exactly level to every common apprehension. . . . Every thing in Christianity is not clear, and intelligible, and comprehensible by the *weakest noddle*." Anon, taking another view of the matter, he says:—"Why did the apostles write these? was it not that those they wrote to, might give their assent to them? Why should not *every one of these evangelical truths* be believed and embraced? They are in our Bibles for that very purpose." And, as a reason why they should be believed, he says they are "intelligible and plain;" that there is no "ambiguity and doubtfulness in them; they shine with their own light, and to an unprejudiced eye, are plain, evident, and illustrious."

Upon this Locke remarks:—"To draw the Unmasker out of the clouds, and prevent his hiding himself in the doubtfulness of his expressions, I shall desire him to say directly whether the articles which are necessary to be believed to make a man a Christian, and particularly those he has set down for such, are all plain and intelligible, and such as may be understood and comprehended (I will not say in the Unmasker's ridiculous way, 'by the weakest noddles,' but) by every illiterate countryman and woman capable of church communion? If he says yes, then all mysteries are excluded out of his articles necessary to be believed, to make a man a Christian. For that which can be comprehended by every day-laborer, every poor spinster, that is a member of the church, cannot be a mystery. And if what such

illiterate people cannot understand, be required to be believed to make them Christians, the greatest part of mankind are shut out from being Christians."

To this, by anticipation, Mr. Edwards answers:—"There is a difficulty in the doctrine of the Trinity, and several truths of the gospel, as to the exact manner of the things themselves, which we shall never be able to comprehend, at least on this side heaven: but there is no difficulty as to the reality and certainty of them, because we know they are revealed to us by God in the Holy Scriptures." "Which answer," says Locke, "of difficulty in the manner, and no difficulty in the reality, having the appearance of a distinction, looks like learning; but when it comes to be applied to the case in hand, will scarce afford us sense. The question is about a proposition to be believed, which must first necessarily be understood. For a man cannot possibly give his assent to any affirmation or negation, unless he understand the terms as they are joined in that proposition, and has a conception of the thing affirmed or denied; and also a conception of the thing concerning which it is affirmed or denied, as they are there put together. But let the proposition be what it will, there is no more to be understood than is expressed in the terms of that proposition. If it be a proposition concerning a matter of fact, it is enough to conceive, and believe the matter of fact. If it be a proposition concerning the manner of the fact, the manner of the fact must also be believed, as it is intelligibly expressed in that proposition: v. g. should this proposition, *ναρκῶσι ἐγείρονται*, be offered as an article of faith to an illiterate countryman of England, he could not believe it; because, though a true proposition, yet it being proposed, in words whose meaning he understood not, he could not give any assent to it. Put it in English, he understands what is meant by 'the dead shall rise.' For he can conceive, that the same man who was dead and senseless, should be alive again; as well as he can that the same man who is now in a lethargy, should awake again; or the same man that is now out of his sight, and he knows not whether he be alive or dead, should return and be with him again; and so he is capable of believing it, though he conceives nothing of the manner how a man revives, wakes or moves. But none of these manners of those actions being included in those propositions, the proposition concerning the matter of fact—if it imply no contradiction in it—may be believed; and so all that is required may be done, whatever difficulty may be as to the exact manner how it is brought about.

"But where the proposition is about the manner, the belief too must be of the manner; v. g. the article is, 'the dead shall be raised with spiritual bodies;' and then the belief must be as well of this manner of the fact as of the fact itself. So that what is said here by the Unmasker about the manner, signifies nothing at all in the case.—What is understood to be expressed in each proposition, whether it be of the manner, or not of the manner, is—by its being a revelation from God—to be believed, as far as it is understood: but no more is required to be believed, concerning any article, than is contained in that article.

“What the Unmasker, for the removing of difficulties, adds further, in these words:—‘But there is no difficulty as to the reality and certainty of the truths of the gospel, because we know they are revealed to us by God in the Holy Scriptures,’ is yet further from signifying any thing to the purpose, than the former. The question is about understanding, and, in what sense they are understood, believing several propositions, or articles of faith, which are to be found in the Scripture. To this the Unmasker says, there can be ‘no difficulty at all as to their reality and certainty, because they are revealed by God.’ Which amounts to no more than this: that there is no difficulty in the understanding and believing this proposition—that whatever is revealed by God is really and certainly true. But is the understanding and believing this single proposition, the understanding and believing all the articles of faith necessary to be believed? Is this all the explicit faith a Christian need have? If so, then a Christian need explicitly believe no more but this one proposition, viz. that all the propositions between the two covers of his Bible, are certainly true. But I imagine the Unmasker will not think the believing this one proposition is a sufficient belief of all those fundamental articles, which he has given us as necessary to be believed, to make a man a Christian. For, if that will serve the turn, I conclude he may make his set of fundamentals as large and express to his system as he pleases: Calvinists, Arminians, Anabaptists, Socinians, will all thus own the belief of them; viz. that all that God has revealed in the Scriptures is really and certainly true.”

Between the publication of the several editions

of the “*Essay on the Human Understanding*,” which appeared during his lifetime, Locke changed his opinion on more than one point; and, like an honest and independent thinker, he was always careful to acknowledge this change. This, among other things, was the case with the use of syllogisms. For in book iv. ch. 17, “I grant,” says he, “that mood and figure is commonly made use of in such cases, (in the discovery of fallacies,) as if the detection of the incoherence of such loose discourses were wholly owing to the syllogistical form; and so I myself formerly thought, till upon a stricter examination I now find, that laying the intermediate ideas naked, in their due order, shows the incoherence of the argumentation better than syllogism.” His opinions, however, on this point, were fluctuating; for in his “*Second Vindication*,” speaking of the fallacies and incoherences of his antagonist, he has these words:—“Nay, if he, or any body, in the 112 pages of his ‘*Socinianism Unmasked*,’ can find but ten arguments that will bear the test of syllogism, the true touchstone of right arguing, I will grant that that treatise deserves all those commendations he has bestowed upon it; though it be made up more of his own panegyric than a confutation of me.”

We have here given a concise view of the controversy, every where employing, as far as possible, the words of the writers themselves; but, it must be confessed, our outline is far from being complete; it being impossible, perhaps, to condense into so small a space, the matter of so many bulky volumes. If the reader is desirous of examining the subject at greater length, we must, therefore, refer him to the original works, where he will find more than enough to satisfy his curiosity.

AN ESSAY

FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES.

LOCKE having, in his controversy with Mr. Edwards, had his attention frequently and forcibly directed to the epistles of St. Paul, which, in his work on Christianity, he was accused of keeping purposely out of sight, betook himself, with renewed diligence, to the study of those parts of Scripture. The result of these studies, undertaken in a mature age, and furthered by every help that learning or philosophy could furnish, was "A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians." To this work, not published until after the philosopher's death, was prefixed, "An Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles, by consulting St. Paul himself," written in the best manner of its distinguished author. But, notwithstanding its singular excellences, it appears to have hitherto attracted comparatively little notice. No collection of religious works, so far as I know, contains it; nor has it ever, I believe, been detached from the Paraphrase and Notes, and published in a separate form. I trust, however, the reader will quickly perceive its great value, not merely as a literary composition, though in that respect also it be a remarkable work; but as showing how earnestly and incessantly the noblest minds have labored to master the sense of the Apostle to the Gentiles; thus, by their example, encouraging others to the undertaking, which he who properly enters on will consider no task.—ED.

To go about to explain any of St. Paul's epistles, after so great a train of expositors and commentators, might seem an attempt of vanity, censurable for its needlessness, did not the daily and approved examples of pious and learned men justify it. This may be some excuse for me to the public, if ever these following papers should chance to come abroad: but to myself, for whose use this work was undertaken, I need no apology. Though I had been conversant in these epistles, as well as in other parts of sacred Scripture, yet I found that I understood them not—I mean the doctrinal and discursive parts of them: though the practical directions, which are usually dropped in the latter part of each epistle, appeared to me very plain, intelligible, and instructive.

I did not, when I reflected on it, very much wonder that this part of sacred Scripture had difficulties in it: many causes of obscurity did rea-

dily occur to me. The nature of epistolary writings in general, disposes the writer to pass by the mentioning of many things, as well known to him to whom his letter is addressed, which are necessary to be laid open to a stranger, to make him comprehend what is said: and it not seldom falls out, that a well-penned letter, which is very easy and intelligible to the receiver, is very obscure to a stranger, who hardly knows what to make of it. The matters that St. Paul wrote about, were certainly things well known to those he wrote to, and which they had some peculiar concern in, which made them easily apprehend his meaning, and see the tendency and force of his discourse. But we having now, at this distance, no information of the occasion of his writing, little or no knowledge of the temper and circumstances those he wrote to were in, but what is to be gathered out of the epistles themselves, it is not strange that many things in them lie concealed to us, which no doubt they who were concerned in the letter understood at first sight. Add to this, that in many places it is manifest he answers letters sent, and questions proposed to him, which if we had, would much better clear those passages that relate to them, than all the learned notes of critics and commentators, who in after-times fill us with their conjectures; for very often, as to the matter in hand, they are nothing else.

The language wherein these epistles are written are another, and that no small occasion of their obscurity to us now: the words are Greek, a language dead many ages since; a language of a very witty volatile people, seekers after novelty, and abounding with a variety of notions and sects, to which they applied the terms of their common tongue with great liberty and variety; and yet this makes but one small part of the difficulty in the language of these epistles; there is a peculiarity in it, that much more obscures and perplexes the meaning of these writings, than what can be occasioned by the looseness and variety of the Greek tongue. The terms are Greek, but the idiom or turn of the phrases may be truly said to be Hebrew or Syriac. The custom and familiarity of which tongues, do sometimes so far influence the expressions in these epistles, that one may observe the force of the Hebrew conjugations, particularly that of Hiphil, given to Greek verbs, in a way unknown to the Grecians themselves. Nor is this all: the subject treated of in these epistles is so wholly new, and the doctrines contained in them so perfectly remote from the notions that mankind were acquainted with, that most of the important terms in it have quite another signification from what they have in other discourses: so that putting all together, we may truly say, that the New Testa-

ment is a book written in a language peculiar to itself.

To these causes of obscurity, common to St. Paul with most of the other penmen of the several books of the New Testament, we may add those that are peculiarly his, and owing to his style and temper. He was, as it is visible, a man of quick thought and warm temper, mighty well versed in the writings of the Old Testament, and full of the doctrine of the New. All this put together, suggested matter to him in abundance on those subjects which came in his way; so that one may consider him, when he was writing, as beset with a crowd of thoughts, all striving for utterance. In this posture of mind it was almost impossible for him to keep that slow pace, and observe minutely that order and method of ranging all he said, from which results an easy and obvious perspicuity. To this plenty and vehemence of his, may be imputed those many large parentheses, which a careful reader may observe in his epistles. Upon this account also it is, that he often breaks off in the middle of an argument, to let in some new thought suggested by his own words; which having pursued and explained, as far as conduced to his present purpose, he reassumes again the thread of his discourse, and goes on with it, without taking any notice that he returns again to what he had been before saying, though sometimes it be so far off, that it may well have slipped out of his mind, and requires a very attentive reader to observe, and so bring the disjointed members together, as to make up the connection, and see how the scattered parts of the discourse hang together in a coherent, well-agreeing sense, that makes it all of a piece.

Besides the disturbance in perusing St. Paul's epistles, from the plenty and vivacity of his thoughts, which may obscure his method, and often hide his sense from an unwary, or over-hasty reader; the frequent changing of the personage he speaks in, renders the sense very uncertain, and is apt to mislead one that has not some clue to guide him:—sometimes by the pronoun I, he means himself, sometimes any Christian; sometimes a Jew, and sometimes any man, &c. If speaking of himself in the first person singular has so various meanings, his use of the first person plural is with a far greater latitude; sometimes designing himself alone, sometimes those with himself, whom he makes partners to the epistle; sometimes with himself comprehending the other apostles, or preachers of the gospel, or Christians: nay, sometimes he in that way speaks of the converted Jews, other times of the converted Gentiles, and sometimes of others, in a more or less extended sense, every one of which varies the meaning of the place, and makes it to be differently understood. I have forbore to trouble the reader with examples of them here. If his own observation hath not already furnished him with them, a little attention will satisfy him in the point.

In the current also of his discourse, he sometimes drops in the objections of others, and his answers to them, without any change in the scheme of his language, that might give notice of any other speaking besides himself. This requires great attention to observe; and yet if he be neglected or overlooked, will make the reader

very much mistake, and misunderstand his meaning, and render the sense very perplexed.

These are intrinsic difficulties arising from the text itself, whereof there might be a great many other named, as the uncertainty, sometimes, who are the persons he speaks to, or the opinions or practices which he has in his eye; sometimes in alluding to them, sometimes in his exhortations and reproofs. But those above mentioned being the chief, it may suffice to have opened our eyes a little upon them, which, well examined, may contribute towards our discovery of the rest.

To these we may subjoin two external causes that have made no small increase of the native and original difficulties that keep us from an easy and assured discovery of St. Paul's sense, in many parts of his epistles; and those are,

First, The dividing of them into chapters and verses, as we have done, whereby they are so chopped and minced, and as they are now printed, stand so broken and divided, that not only the common people take the verses usually for distinct aphorisms, but even men of more advanced knowledge, in reading them, lose very much of the strength and force of the coherence, and the light that depends on it. Our minds are so weak and narrow, that they have need of all the helps and assistances that can be procured, to lay before them undisturbedly, the thread and coherence of any discourse; by which alone they are truly improved and lead into the genuine sense of the author. When the eye is constantly disturbed with loose sentences, that by their standing and separation appear as so many distinct fragments, the mind will have much ado to take in, and carry on in its memory an uniform discourse of dependent reasonings; especially having from the cradle been used to wrong impressions concerning them, and constantly accustomed to hear them quoted as distinct sentences, without any limitation or explication of their precise meaning from the place they stand in, and the relation they bear to what goes before, or follows. These divisions, also, have given occasion to the reading these epistles by parcels and in scraps, which has further confirmed the evil arising from such partitions. And I doubt not but every one will confess it to be a very unlikely way to come to the understanding of any other letters, to read them piecemeal, a bit to-day and another scrap to-morrow, and so on, by broken intervals; especially if the pause and cessation would be made as the chapters the apostle's epistles are divided into, ending sometimes in the middle of a discourse, and sometimes in the middle of a sentence. It cannot therefore but be wondered, that that should be permitted to be done to Holy Writ, which would visibly disturb the sense, and hinder the understanding of any other book whatsoever. If Tully's epistles were so printed, and so used, I ask whether they would not be much harder to be understood, less easy and less pleasant to be read by much, than now they are?

How plain soever this abuse is, and what prejudice soever it does to the understanding of the sacred Scripture, yet if a Bible was printed as it should be, and as the several parts of it were written, in continued discourses where the argument is continued, I doubt not but the several parties would

complain of it as an innovation, and a dangerous change in the publishing those holy books. And indeed those who are for maintaining their opinions and the systems of parties by sound of words, with a neglect of the true sense of Scripture, would have reason to make and foment the outcry. They would most of them be immediately disarmed of their great magazine of artillery wherewith they defend themselves, and fall upon others, if the holy Scriptures were but laid before the eyes of Christians in its due connection and consistency: it would not then be so easy to snatch out a few words, as if they were separate from the rest, to serve a purpose, to which they do not at all belong, and with which they have nothing to do. But as the matter now stands, he that has a mind to it may, at a cheap rate, be a notable champion for the truth; that is, for the doctrines of the sect that chance or interest has cast him into. He need but be furnished with verses of sacred Scripture, containing words and expressions that are but flexible, (as all general, obscure, and doubtful ones are,) and his system, that has appropriated them to the orthodoxy of his church, makes them immediately strong and irrefragable arguments for his opinion. This is the benefit of loose sentences, and Scripture crumbled into verses, which quickly turn into independent aphorisms. But if the quotation in the verse produced were considered as a part of a continued coherent discourse, and so its sense were limited by the tenor of the context, most of these forward and warm disputants would be quite stripped of those, which they doubt not now to call spiritual weapons; and they would have often nothing to say that would not show their weakness, and manifestly fly in their faces. I crave leave to set down a saying of the learned and judicious Mr. Selden: "In interpreting the Scripture," says he, "many do as if a man should see one have ten pounds, which he reckoned by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; meaning four was but four units, and five five units, &c.: and that he had in all but ten pounds. The other that sees him, takes not the figures together, as he doth, but picks here and there; and thereupon reports that he had five pounds in one bag, and six pounds in another bag, and nine pounds in another bag, &c., when, as in truth, he has but ten pounds in all. So we pick out a text here and there, to make it serve our turn; whereas if we take it altogether, and consider what went before, and what followed after, we should find it meant no such thing." I have heard sober Christians very much admire why ordinary illiterate people, who were professors, that showed a concern for religion, seemed much more conversant in St. Paul's epistles, than in the plainer, and as it seemed to them, much more intelligible parts of the New Testament: they confessed, that though they read St. Paul's epistles with their best attention, yet they generally found them too hard to be mastered; and they labored in vain so far to reach the apostle's meaning all along, in the train of what he said, as to read them with that satisfaction that arises from a feeling that we understand and fully comprehend the force and reasoning of an author; and therefore they could not imagine what those saw in them, whose eyes they thought not much better than their own. But the case was plain: these sober, inquisitive readers

had a mind to see nothing in St. Paul's epistles but just what he meant: whereas those others of a quicker and gayer sight could see in them what they pleased. Nothing is more acceptable to fancy than pliant terms and expressions that are not obstinate; in such it can find its account with delight, and with them be illuminated, orthodox, infallible at pleasure, and in its own way. But where the sense of the author goes visibly in its own train, and the words receiving a determined sense from their companions and adjacents, will not consent to give countenance and color to what is agreed to be right, and must be supported at any rate, there men of established orthodoxy do not so well find their satisfaction. And, perhaps, if it were well examined, it would be no very extravagant paradox to say, that there are fewer that bring their opinions to the sacred Scripture to be tried by that infallible rule, than bring the sacred Scriptures to their opinions, to bend it to them, to make it as they can a cover and guard of them. And to this purpose its being divided into verses, and brought as much as may be into loose and general aphorisms, makes it most useful and serviceable. And in this lies the other great cause of obscurity and perplexedness, which has been cast upon St. Paul's epistles from without.

St. Paul's epistles, as they stand translated in our English Bibles, are now by long and constant use, become a part of the English language, and common phraseology, especially in matters of religion. This every one uses familiarly, and thinks he understands; but it must be observed, that if he has a distinct meaning when he uses those words and phrases, and knows himself what he intends by them, it is always according to the sense of his own system, and the articles or interpretations of the society he is engaged in. So that all this knowledge and understanding which he has in the use of these passages of sacred Scripture, reaches no further than this, that he knows (and that is very well) what he himself says, but thereby knows nothing at all what St. Paul said in them. The apostle wrote not at what man's system, and so his meaning cannot be known by it. This being the ordinary way of understanding the epistles, and every sect being perfectly orthodox in its own judgment, what a great and invincible darkness must this cast upon St. Paul's meaning to all those of that way, in all those places where his thoughts and sense run counter to what any party has espoused for orthodox; as it must unavoidably to all but one of the different systems, in all those passages that any way relate to the points in controversy between them?

This is a mischief which, however frequent and almost natural, reaches so far, that it would justly make all those who depend upon them, wholly diffident of commentators, and let them see how little help was to be expected from them, in relying on them for the true sense of the sacred Scripture, did they not take care to help to cozen themselves, by choosing to use and pin their faith on such expositors as explain the sacred Scripture in favor of those opinions that they beforehand have voted orthodox, and bring to the sacred Scripture, not for trial, but confirmation. Nobody can think that any text of St. Paul's epistles has two contrary meanings; and yet so it must have to two differ-

ent men, who taking two commentators of different sects for their respective guides into the sense of any one of the epistles, shall build upon their respective expositions. We need go no further for a proof of it, than the notes of the two celebrated commentators on the New Testament, Dr. Hammond and Beza, both men of parts and learning, and both thought, by their followers, men mighty in the sacred Scriptures. So that here we see the hopes of great benefit and light from expositors and commentators is, in a great part, abated; and those who have most need of their help can receive but little from them, and can have very little assurance of reaching the apostle's sense by what they find in them, whilst matters remain in the same state they are in at present. For those who find they need help, and would borrow light from expositors, either consult only those who have the good luck to be thought sound and orthodox, avoiding those of different sentiments from themselves in the great and approved points of their systems, as dangerous, and not fit to be meddled with; or else with indifferency look into the notes of all commentators promiscuously. The first of these take pains only to confirm themselves in the opinions and tenets they have already, which, whether it be the way to get the true meaning of what St. Paul delivered is easy to determine. The others, with much more fairness to themselves, though with reaping little more advantage, (unless they have something else to guide them into the apostle's meaning than the comments themselves,) seek help on all hands, and refuse not to be taught by any one, who offers to enlighten them in any of the dark passages. But here though they avoid the mischief which the others fall into, of being confined in their sense, and seeing nothing but that in St. Paul's writings, be it right or wrong, yet they run into as great on the other side, and instead of being confirmed in the meaning that they thought they saw in the text, are distracted with an hundred, suggested by those they advised with; and so, instead of that one sense of the Scripture, which they carried with them to their commentators, return from them with none at all.

This indeed seems to make the case desperate; for, if the comments and expositions of pious and learned men cannot be depended on, whither shall we go for help? To which I answer, I would not be mistaken, as if I thought the labors of the learned in this case wholly lost, and fruitless. There is great use and benefit to be made of them, when we have once got a rule to know which of their expositions, in the great variety there is of them, explains the words and phrases according to the apostle's meaning. Till then it is evident, from what is above said, they serve for the most part to no other use, but either to make us find our own sense, and not his, in St. Paul's words, or else to find in them no settled sense at all.

Here it will be asked, how shall we come by this rule you mention? Where is that touchstone to be had, that will show us whether the meaning we ourselves put, or take as put by others upon St. Paul's words in his epistles, be truly his meaning or no? I will not say the way which I propose, and have in the following paraphrase followed, will make us infallible in our interpretations of

the apostle's text; but this I will own, that till I took this way, St. Paul's epistles to me, in the ordinary way of reading and studying them, were very obscure parts of Scripture, that left me almost every where at a loss: and I was at a great uncertainty in which of the contrary senses, that were to be found in his commentators, he was to be taken. Whether what I have done has made it any clearer and more visible now, I must leave others to judge. This I beg leave to say for myself, that if some very sober judicious Christians, no strangers to the sacred Scriptures; nay, learned divines of the church of England, had not professed that by the perusal of these following papers they understood the epistles better much than they did before, and had not, with repeated instances, pressed me to publish them, I should not have consented they should have gone beyond my own private use, for which they were at first designed, and where they made me not repent my pains.

If any one be so far pleased with my endeavors, as to think it worth while to be informed what was the clue I guided myself by through all the dark passages of these epistles, I shall minutely tell him the steps by which I was brought into this way, that he may judge whether I proceeded rationally, upon right grounds or no, if so be, any thing in so mean an example as mine may be worth his notice.

After I had found, by long experience, that the reading of the text and comments in the ordinary way, proved not so successful as I wished to the end proposed, I began to suspect that in reading a chapter, as was usual, and thereupon sometimes consulting expositors upon some hard places of it, which at that time most affected me, as relating to points then under consideration in my own mind, or in debate amongst others, was not a right method to get into the true sense of these epistles. I saw plainly, after I began once to reflect on it, that if any one now should write me a letter, as long at St. Paul's to the Romans, concerning such a matter as that is, in a style as foreign, and expressions as dubious as his seem to be, if I should divide it into fifteen or sixteen chapters, and read of them one to-day, and another to-morrow, &c., it was ten to one I should never come to a full and clear comprehension of it. The way to understand the mind of him that wrote it, every one would agree, was to read the whole letter through, from one end to the other, all at once, to see what was the main subject and tendency of it: or if it had several views and purposes in it, not dependent one of another, nor in a subordination to one chief aim and end, to discover what those different matters were, and where the author concluded one and began another: and if there were any necessity of dividing the epistle into parts, to make the boundaries of them.

In prosecution of this thought, I concluded it necessary, for the understanding of any one of St. Paul's epistles, to read it all through at one sitting, and to observe, as well as I could, the drift and design of his writing it. If the first reading gave me some light, the second gave me more; and so I persisted on reading, constantly, the whole epistle over at once, till I came to have a good general view of the apostle's main purpose in writing the

epistle, the chief branches of his discourse wherein he prosecuted it, the arguments he used, and the disposition of the whole.

This, I confess, is not to be obtained by one or two hasty readings; it must be repeated again and again, with a close attention to the tenor of the discourse, and a perfect neglect of the divisions into chapters and verses. On the contrary, the safest way is to suppose that the epistle has but one business, and one aim; till, by a frequent perusal of it, you are forced to see there are distinct independent matters in it, which will forwardly enough show themselves.

It requires so much more pains, judgment, and application to find the coherence of obscure and abstruse writings, and makes them so much the more unfit to serve prejudice and pre-occupation when found, that it is not to be wondered that St. Paul's epistles have, with many, passed rather for disjointed, loose, pious discourses, full of warmth and zeal and overflows of light, rather than for calm, strong, coherent reasonings, that carried a thread of argument and consistency all through them.

But this muttering of lazy or ill-disposed readers, hindered me not from persisting in the course I had begun: I continued to read the same epistle over and over, and over again, till I came to discover, as appeared to me, what was the drift and aim of it; and by what steps and arguments St. Paul prosecuted his purpose. I remembered that St. Paul was miraculously called to the ministry of the gospel, and declared to be a chosen vessel; that he had the whole doctrine of the gospel from God by immediate revelation, and was appointed to be the apostle of the Gentiles, for the propagating of it in the heathen world. This was enough to persuade me that he was not a man of loose and shattered parts, incapable to argue, and unfit to convince those he had to deal with. God knows how to choose fit instruments for the business he employs them in. A large stock of Jewish learning he had taken in at the feet of Gamaliel; and for his information in Christian knowledge, and the mysteries and depths of the dispensation of grace by Jesus Christ, God himself had condescended to be his instructor and teacher. The light of the gospel he had received from the Fountain and Father of Light himself, who, I concluded, had not furnished him, in this extraordinary manner, if all this plentiful stock of learning and illumination had been in danger to have been lost, or proved useless, in a jumbled and confused head; nor have laid up such a store of admirable and useful knowledge in a man who, for want of method and order, clearness of conception, or pertinency in discourse, could not draw it out into use with the greatest advantages of force and coherence. That he knew how to prosecute his purpose with strength of argument and close reasoning, without incoherent sallies, or the intermixing of things foreign to his business, was evident to me from several speeches of his recorded in the Acts: and it was hard to think that a man who could talk with so much consistency and clearness of conviction, should not be able to write without confusion, inextricable obscurity, and perpetual rambling. The force, order, and perspicuity of those discourses could not be denied to be very visible.

How then came it that the like was thought much wanting in his epistles? and of this there appeared to me this plain reason: the particularities of the history in which these speeches are inserted, show St. Paul's end in speaking; which being seen, casts a light on the whole, and shows the pertinency of all that he says. But his epistles not being so circumstantiated, there being no concurring history that plainly declares the disposition St. Paul was in, what the actions, expectations, or demands of those to whom he wrote required him to speak to, we are nowhere told. All this, and a great deal more, necessary to guide us into the true meaning of the epistles, is to be had only from the epistles themselves, and to be gathered from thence with stubborn attention, and more than common application.

This being the only safe guide (under the Spirit of God, that dictated these sacred writings) that can be relied on, I hope I may be excused, if I venture to say, that the utmost ought to be done to observe and trace out St. Paul's reasonings; to follow the thread of his discourse in each of his epistles; to show how it goes on still directed with the same view, and pertinently drawing the several incidents towards the same point. To understand him right, his inferences should be strictly observed, and it should be carefully examined from what they are drawn, and what they tend to. He is certainly a coherent, argumentative, pertinent writer; and care, I think, should be taken, in expounding of him, to show that he is so. But though I say he has weighty aims in his epistles, which he steadily keeps in his eye, and drives at it in all that he says; yet I do not say that he puts his discourses into an artificial method, or leads his reader into a distinction of his arguments, or gives them notice of new matter by rhetorical or studied transitions. He has no ornaments borrowed from the Greek eloquence; no notions of their philosophy mixed with his doctrine to set it off. 'The enticing words of man's wisdom,' whereby he means all the studied rules of the Grecian schools, which made them such masters in the art of speaking, he, as he says himself, 1 Cor. 2. iv., wholly neglected. The reason whereof he gives in the next verse, and in other places; but the politeness of language, delicacy of style, fineness of expression, labored periods, artificial transitions, and a very methodical ranging of the parts with such other embellishments as make a discourse enter the mind smoothly, and strike the fancy at first hearing, have little or no place in his style; yet coherence of discourse, and a direct tendency of all the parts of it to the argument in hand, are most eminently to be found in him. This I take to be his character, and doubt not but he will be found to be so upon diligent examination. And in this, if it be so, we have a clue, if we will take the pains to find it, that will conduct us with surety through those seemingly dark places and imagined intricacies, in which Christians have wandered so far one from another as to find quite contrary senses.

Whether a superficial reading, accompanied with the common opinion of his invincible obscurity, has kept off some from seeking in him the coherence of a discourse, tending, with close, strong reasoning, to a point; or a seemingly more honorable opinion of one that had been rapt up into the

third heaven, as if from a man so warmed and illuminated as he had been, nothing could be expected but flashes of light, and raptures of zeal, hindered others to look for a train of reasoning, proceeding on regular and cogent argumentation, from a man raised above the ordinary pitch of humanity to a higher and brighter way of illumination; or else whether others were loath to beat their heads about the tenor and coherence in St. Paul's discourses, which, if found out, possibly might set him at a manifest and irreconcilable difference with their systems; it is certain that whatever hath been the cause, this way of getting the true sense of St. Paul's epistles seems not to have been much made use of, or at least so thoroughly pursued as I am apt to think it deserves.

For, granting that he was full-stored with the knowledge of the things he treated of, for he had light from heaven, it was God himself furnished him, and he could not want: allowing also that he had ability to make use of the knowledge given him, for the end for which it was given him, viz., the information, conviction, and conversion of others; and accordingly that he knew how to direct his discourse to the point in hand, we cannot widely mistake the parts of his discourse employed about it, when we have any where found out the point he drives at: wherever we have got a view of his design, and the aim he proposed to himself in writing, we may be sure that such or such an interpretation does not give us his genuine sense, it being nothing at all to his present purpose. Nay, among various meanings given a text, it fails not to direct us to the best, and very often to assure us of the true. For it is no presumption, when one sees a man arguing for this or that proposition, if he be a sober man, master of reason or common sense, and takes any care of what he says, to pronounce with confidence, in several cases, that he could not talk thus or thus.

I do not yet so magnify this method of studying St. Paul's epistles, as well as other parts of sacred Scripture, as to think it will perfectly clear every hard place, and leave no doubt unresolved. I know expressions now out of use, opinions of those times not heard of in our days, allusions to customs lost to us, and various circumstances and particularities of the parties, which we cannot come at, &c., must needs continue several passages in the dark, now to us at this distance, which shone with full light to those they were directed to. But for all that, the studying of St. Paul's epistles in the way I have proposed, will, I humbly conceive, carry us a great length in the right understanding of them, and make us rejoice in the light we receive from those most useful parts of divine revelation, by furnishing us with visible grounds that we are not mistaken, whilst the consistency of the discourse and the pertinency of it to the design he is upon, vouches it worthy of our great apostle. At least I hope it may be my excuse for having endeavored to make St. Paul an interpreter to me of his own epistles.

To this may be added another help, which St. Paul himself affords us, towards the attaining the true meaning contained in his epistles. He that reads him with the attention I propose, will easily observe, that as he was full of the doctrine of the gospel, so it lay all clear and in order open to his

view. When he gave his thoughts utterance upon any point, the matter flowed like a torrent, but it is plain, it was a matter he was perfectly master of: he fully possessed the entire revelation he had received from God, had thoroughly digested it, all the parts were formed together in his mind into one well-contracted harmonious body: so that he was no way at an uncertainty, nor ever in the least at a loss concerning any branch of it. One may see his thoughts were all of a piece in all his epistles; his notions were at all times uniform, and constantly the same, though his expressions very various. In them he seems to take great liberty. This at least is certain, that no one seems less tied up to a form of words. If then, having by the method before proposed got into the sense of the several epistles, we will but compare what he says in the places where he treats of the same subject, we can hardly be mistaken in his sense, nor doubt what it was that he believed and taught concerning those points of the Christian religion. I know it is not unusual to find a multitude of texts heaped up for the maintaining of an espoused proposition, but in a sense often so remote from their true meaning, that one can hardly avoid thinking that those who so used them either sought not or valued not the sense; and were satisfied with the sound, where they could but get that to favor them. But a verbal concordance leads not always to texts of the same meaning: trusting too much thereto, will furnish us but with slight proofs in many cases; and any one may observe how apt that is to jumble together passages of Scripture not relating to the same matter, and thereby to disturb and unsettle the true meaning of Holy Scripture. I have therefore said that we should compare together places of Scripture treating of the same point. Thus, indeed, one part of the sacred text could not fail to give light unto another. And since the providence of God hath so ordered it, that St. Paul has written a great number of epistles, which though upon different occasions, and to several purposes, yet are all confined within the business of his apostleship, and so contain nothing but points of Christian instruction, amongst which he seldom fails to drop in, and often to enlarge on the great and distinguishing doctrines of our holy religion; which, if quitting our own infallibility in that analogy of faith which we have made to ourselves, or have implicitly adopted from some other, we would carefully lay together, and diligently compare and study, I am apt to think would give us St. Paul's system in a clear and indisputable sense; which every one must acknowledge to be a better standard to interpret his meaning by, in any obscure and doubtful parts of his epistles, if any such should still remain, than the system, confession, or articles of any church or society of Christians yet known, which, however pretended to be founded on Scripture, are visibly the contrivances of men, (fallible both in their opinions and interpretations,) and, as is visible in most of them, made with partial views, and adapted to what the occasions of that time, and the present circumstances they were then in, were thought to require, for the support or justification of themselves. Their philosophy also has its part in misleading men from the true sense of the sacred Scripture. He that shall attentively

read the Christian writers after the ages of the apostles, will easily find how much the philosophy they were tinctured with influenced them in their understanding of the books of the Old and New Testament. In the ages wherein Platonism prevailed, the converts to Christianity of that school, on all occasions, interpreted Holy Writ according to the notions they had imbibed from that philosophy. Aristotle's doctrine had the same effect in its turn, and when it degenerated into the Peripateticism of the schools, that too brought its notions and distinctions into divinity, and affixed them to the terms of the sacred Scripture. And we may see still how at this day every one's philosophy regulates every one's interpretation of the word of God. Those who are possessed with the doctrine of ærial and æthærial vehicles, have thence borrowed an interpretation of the four first verses of 2 Cor. v., without having any ground to think that St. Paul had the least notion of any such vehicles. It is plain that the teaching of men philosophy was no part of the design of divine revelation; but that the expressions of Scripture are commonly suited in those matters to the vulgar apprehensions and conceptions of the place and people where they were delivered. And as to the doctrine therein directly taught by the apostles, that tends wholly to the setting up the kingdom of Jesus Christ in this world, and the salvation of men's souls; and in this it is plain their expressions were conformed to the ideas and notions which they had received from revelation, or were consequent from it. We shall therefore in vain go about to interpret their words by the notions of our philosophy, and the doctrines of men delivered in our schools. This is to explain the apostles' meaning by what they never thought of whilst they were writing; which is not the way to find their sense in what they delivered, but our own, and to take up from their writings not what they left there for us, but what we bring along with us in ourselves. He that would understand St. Paul right, must understand his terms in the sense he uses them, and not as they are appropriated by each man's particular philosophy, to conceptions that never entered the mind of the apostle. For example, he that shall bring the philosophy now taught and received to the explaining of spirit, soul, and body, mentioned 1 Thess. v. 23, will, I fear, hardly reach St. Paul's sense, or represent to himself the notions St. Paul then had in his mind. That is what we should aim at in reading him, or any other author; and until we from his words paint his very ideas and thoughts in our minds, we do not understand him.

In the divisions I have made, I have endeavored the best I could to govern myself by the diversity of matter. But in a writer like St. Paul, it is not so easy always to find precisely where one subject ends and another begins. He is full of the matter, he treats and writes with warmth, which usually neglects method, and those partitions and pauses, which men, educated in the schools of rhetoricians usually observe. Those arts of writing St. Paul, as well out of design as temper, wholly laid by: the subject he had in hand, and the

grounds upon which it stood firm, and by which he enforced it, was what alone he minded; and without solemnly winding up one argument, and intimating any way that he began another, let his thoughts, which were fully possessed of the matter, run in one continued train, wherein the parts of his discourse were wove one into another. So that it is seldom that the scheme of his discourse makes any gap; and, therefore, without breaking in upon the connection of his language, it is hardly possible to separate his discourse, and give a distinct view of his several arguments in distinct sections.

I am far from pretending infallibility in the sense I have any where given in my Paraphrase or Notes; that would be to erect myself into an apostle, a presumption of the highest nature in any one that cannot confirm what he says by miracles. I have, for my own information, sought the true meaning as far as my poor abilities would reach: and I have unbiassedly embraced what, upon a fair inquiry, appeared so to me. This I thought my duty and interest in a matter of so great concernment to me. If I must believe for myself, it is unavoidable that I must understand for myself. For if I blindly and with an implicit faith, take the pope's interpretation of the sacred Scripture, without examining whether it be Christ's meaning, it is the pope I believe in, and not in Christ; it is his authority I rest upon; it is what he says I embrace: for what it is Christ says I neither know nor concern myself. It is the same thing when I set up any other man in Christ's place, and make him the authentic interpreter of sacred Scripture to myself. He may possibly understand the sacred Scripture as right as any man; but I shall do well to examine myself whether that which I do not know, nay (which in the way I take) I can never know, can justify me in making myself his disciple, instead of Jesus Christ's, who of right is alone and ought to be my only Lord and master, and it will be no less sacrilege in me to substitute to myself any other in his room, to be a prophet to me, than to be my king or priest.

The same reasons that put me upon doing what I have in these papers done, will exempt me from all suspicion of imposing my interpretation on others. The reasons that led me into the meaning which prevailed on my mind, are set down with it: as far as they carry light and conviction to any other man's understanding, so far I hope my labors may be of some use to him; beyond the evidence it carries with it, I advise him not to follow mine, nor any man's interpretation. We are all men, liable to errors, and infected with them; but have this sure way to preserve ourselves every one from danger by them, if, laying aside sloth, carelessness, prejudice, party, and a reverence of men, we betake ourselves in earnest to the study of the way to salvation, in those holy writings wherein God has revealed it from heaven, and proposed it to the world, seeking our religion where we are sure it is in truth to be found, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things.

A DISCOURSE ON MIRACLES.

THIS tractate may properly be regarded as the development of the view taken of the subject of miracles, in the Essay on the Human Understanding. And though neither very elaborate nor extensive, it will always, for the religious inquirer, possess considerable interest; partly for its intrinsic merits, partly because it contains the ripest thoughts of one of the greatest lights in philosophy that the world has to boast of. The passage of the Essay in which he had already, in the earlier part of his life, glanced at the subject, is as follows:—"Though the common experience, and the ordinary course of things, have justly a mighty influence on the minds of men, to make them give or refuse credit to any thing proposed to their belief; yet there is one case, wherein the strangeness of the fact lessens not the assent to a fair testimony given of it. For where such supernatural events are suitable to ends aimed at by Him, who has the power to change the course of nature, there, under such circumstances, they may be the fitter to procure belief, by how much the more they are beyond or contrary to ordinary observation. This is the proper case of miracles, which, well attested, do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths, which need such confirmation." Book iv. Chap. 16, § 13.—Ed.

To discourse of miracles without defining what one means by the word miracle, is to make a show, but in effect to talk of nothing.

A miracle, then, I take to be a sensible operation, which, being above the comprehension of the spectator, and in his opinion contrary to the established course of nature, is taken by him to be divine.

He that is present at the fact, is a spectator: he that believes the history of the fact, puts himself in the place of a spectator.

This definition, it is probable, will not escape these two exceptions:—

1. That hereby what is a miracle is made very uncertain: for it depending on the opinion of the spectator, that will be a miracle to one which will not be so to another.

In answer to which, it is enough to say, that this objection is of no force, but in the mouth of one who can produce a definition of a miracle not liable to the same exception, which I think not easy to do; for it being agreed, that a miracle must be that which surpasses the force of nature in the established, steady laws of causes and effects, nothing can be taken to be a miracle but what is judged to exceed those laws. Now every one being able to judge of those laws only by his own acquaintance with nature, and notions of its force,

(which are different in different men,) it is unavoidable that that should be a miracle to one, which is not so to another.

2. Another objection to this definition will be, that the notion of a miracle thus enlarged, may come sometimes to take in operations that have nothing extraordinary or supernatural in them, and thereby invalidate the use of miracles for the attesting of divine revelation.

To which I answer, not at all, if the testimony which divine revelation receives from miracles be rightly considered.

To know that any revelation is from God, it is necessary to know that the messenger that delivers it is sent from God; and that cannot be known but by some credentials given him by God himself. Let us see then whether miracles, in my sense, be not such credentials, and will not infallibly direct us right in the search of divine revelation.

It is to be considered, that divine revelation receives testimony from no other miracles, but such as are wrought to witness his mission from God, who delivers the revelation. All other miracles that are done in the world, how many or great soever, revelation is not concerned in. Cases wherein there has been, or can be need of miracles for the confirmation of revelation, are fewer than perhaps is imagined. The heathen world, amidst an infinite and uncertain jumble of deities, fables, and worships, had no room for a divine attestation of any one against the rest. Those owners of many gods were at liberty in their worship; and no one of their divinities pretending to be the one only true God, no one of them could be supposed, in the Pagan scheme, to make use of miracles to establish his worship alone, or to abolish that of the other; much less was there any use of miracles to confirm any articles of faith, since no one of them had any such to propose as necessary to be believed by their votaries; and, therefore, I do not remember any miracles recorded in the Greek or Roman writers, as done to confirm any one's mission and doctrine. Conformable herunto we find St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 22, takes notice that the Jews (it is true) required miracles, but as for the Greeks they looked after something else; they knew no need or use there was of miracles to recommend any religion to them. And indeed it is an astonishing mark how far the god of this world had blinded men's minds, if we consider that the Gentile world received and stuck to a religion, which, not being derived from reason, had no sure foundation in revelation. They knew not its original, nor the authors of it, nor seemed concerned to know from whence it came, or by whose authority delivered; and so had no mention or use of miracles for its confirmation. For though there were here and there some pretences to revelation, yet there were not so much as pretences to miracles that attested it.

If we will direct our thoughts by what has been, we must conclude that miracles, as the credentials of a messenger delivering a divine religion, have no place but upon a supposition of one only true God : and that it is so in the nature of the thing, and cannot be otherwise, I think will be made appear in the sequel of this discourse. Of such who have come in the name of the one only true God, professing to bring a law from him, we have in history a clear account but of three, viz., Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet. For what the Persees say of their Zoroaster, or the Indians of their Brama, (not to mention all the wild stories of the religions further east,) is so obscure, or so manifestly fabulous, that no account can be made of it. Now of the three before mentioned, Mahomet having none to produce, pretends to no miracles for the vouching his mission : so that the only revelations that come attested by miracles, being only those of Moses and Christ, and they confirming each other, the business of miracles, as it stands really in matter of fact, has no manner of difficulty in it ; and I think the most scrupulous or sceptical cannot from miracles raise the least doubt against the divine revelation of the gospel.

But since the speculative and learned will be putting of cases which never were, and it may be presumed never will be ; since scholars and disputants will be raising of questions where there are none, and enter upon debates whereof there is no need ; I crave leave to say, that he who comes with a message from God to be delivered to the world, cannot be refused belief, if he vouches his mission by a miracle, because his credentials have a right to it. For every rational thinking man must conclude as Nicodemus did : " We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these signs which thou dost, except God be with him."

For example, Jesus of Nazareth professes himself sent from God : he with a word calms a tempest at sea : this one looks on as a miracle, and consequently cannot but receive his doctrine : another thinks this might be the effect of chance, or skill in the weather, and no miracle, and so stands out ; but afterwards seeing him walk on the sea, owns that for a miracle, and believes : which yet upon another has not that force, who suspects it may possibly be done by the assistance of a spirit ; but yet the same person, seeing afterwards our Saviour cure an inveterate palsy by a word, admits that for a miracle, and becomes a convert. Another overlooking it in this instance, afterwards finds a miracle in his giving sight to one born blind, or in raising the dead, or his raising himself from the dead, and so receives his doctrine as a revelation coming from God. By all which it is plain, that where the miracle is admitted, the doctrine cannot be rejected ; it comes with the assurance of a divine attestation to him that allows the miracle, and he cannot question its truth.

The next thing then is, what shall be a sufficient inducement to take any extraordinary operation to be a miracle, i. e. wrought by God himself for the attestation of a revelation from him.

And to this I answer, the carrying with it the marks of a greater power than appears in opposition to it. For,

First, This removes the main difficulty where it presses hardest, and clears the matter from doubt, when extraordinary and supernatural operations are brought to support opposite missions, about which methinks more dust has been raised by men of leisure than so plain a matter needed. For since God's power is paramount to all, and no opposition can be made against him with an equal force to his ; and since his honor and goodness can never be supposed to suffer his messenger and his truth to be borne down by the appearance of a greater power on the side of an impostor, and in favor of a lie ; whenever there is an opposition, and two pretending to be sent from heaven clash, the signs which carry with them the evident marks of a greater power, will always be a certain and unquestionable evidence, that the truth and divine mission are on that side on which they appear. For, though the discovery, how the lying wonders are or can be produced, be beyond the capacity of the ignorant, and often beyond the conception of the most knowing spectator, who is therefore forced to allow them, in his apprehension, to be above the force of natural causes and effects ; yet he cannot but know they are not seals set by God to his truth for the attesting of it, since they are opposed by miracles that carry the evident marks of a greater and superior power, and therefore they cannot at all shake the authority of one so supported. God can never be thought to suffer that a lie, set up in opposition to a truth coming from him, should be backed with a greater power than he will show for the confirmation and propagation of a doctrine which he has revealed, to the end it might be believed. The producing of serpents, blood, and frogs, by the Egyptian sorcerers and by Moses, could not, to the spectators, but appear equally miraculous ; which of the pretenders then had their mission from God, and the truth, on their side, could not have been determined if the matter had rested there. But when Moses's serpent eat up theirs, when he produced lice which they could not, the decision was easy. It was plain James and Jambres acted by an inferior power ; and their operations, how marvellous and extraordinary soever, could not in the least bring in question Moses's mission ; that stood the firmer for this opposition, and remained the more unquestionable after this, than if no such signs had been brought against it.

So likewise the number, variety, and greatness of the miracles, wrought for the confirmation of the doctrine delivered by Jesus Christ, carry with them such strong marks of an extraordinary divine power, that the truth of his mission will stand firm and unquestionable, till any one rising up in opposition to him shall do greater miracles than he and his apostles did. For any thing less will not be of weight to turn the scales in the opinion of any one, whether of an inferior or more exalted understanding. This is one of those palpable truths and trials, of which all mankind are judges ; and there needs no assistance of learning, no deep thought, to come to a certainty in it. Such care has God taken that no pretended revelation should stand in competition with what is truly divine, that we need but open our eyes to see and be sure which came from him. The marks of his overruling power accompany it ; and therefore to this

day we find, that wherever the gospel comes, it prevails, to the beating down the strong holds of Satan, and the dislodging the prince of the power of darkness, driving him away with all his living wonders; which is a standing miracle, carrying with it the testimony of superiority.

What is the uttermost power of natural agents or created beings, men of the greatest reach cannot discover; but that it is not equal to God's omnipotency is obvious to every one's understanding; so that the superior power is an easy, as well as sure guide to revelation, attested by miracles, where they are brought as credentials to an embassy from God.

And thus, upon the same grounds of superiority of power, uncontested revelation will stand too.

For the explaining of which, it may be necessary to premise,

1. That no mission can be looked on to be divine, that delivers any thing derogating from the honor of the one, only true, invisible God, or inconsistent with natural religion and the rules of morality; because God having discovered to men the unity and majesty of his eternal Godhead, and the truths of natural religion and morality, by the light of reason, he cannot be supposed to back the contrary by revelation: for that would be to destroy the evidence and the use of reason, without which men cannot be able to distinguish divine revelation from diabolical imposture.

2. That it cannot be expected that God should send any one into the world on purpose to inform men of things indifferent, and of small moment, or that are knowable by the use of their natural faculties. This would be to lessen the dignity of his Majesty in favour of our sloth, and in prejudice to our reason.

3. The only case then wherein a mission of any one from heaven can be reconciled to the high and awful thoughts men ought to have of the Deity, must be the revelation of some supernatural truths relating to the glory of God, and some great concern of men. Supernatural operations attesting such a revelation may with reason be taken to be miracles, as carrying the marks of a superior and overruling power, as long as no revelation accompanied with marks of a greater power appears against it. Such supernatural signs may justly stand good, and be received for divine, i. e. wrought by a power superior to all, till a mission attested by operations of a greater force shall disprove them: because it cannot be supposed God should suffer his prerogative to be so far usurped by any inferior being, as to permit any creature, depending on him, to set his seals, the marks of his divine authority, to a mission coming from him. For these supernatural signs being the only means God is conceived to have to satisfy men, as rational creatures, of the certainty of any thing he would reveal, as coming from himself, can never consent that it should be wrested out of his hands, to serve the ends and establish the authority of an inferior agent that rivals him. His power being known to have no equal, always will, and always may be safely depended on, to show its superiority in vindicating his authority, and maintaining every truth that he hath revealed. So that the marks of a superior power accompanying it, always have been,

and always will be, a visible and sure guide to divine revelation; by which men may conduct themselves in their examining of revealed religions, and be satisfied which they ought to receive as coming from God; though they have by no means ability precisely to determine what is, or is not above the force of any created being; or what operations can be performed by none but a divine power, and require the immediate hand of the Almighty. And therefore we see it is by that our Saviour measures the great unbelief of the Jews, John xv. 24, saying, "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father;" declaring, that they could not but see the power and presence of God in those many miracles he did, which were greater than ever any other man had done. When God sent Moses to the children of Israel with a message, that now, according to his promise, he would redeem them by his hand out of Egypt, and furnish him with signs and credentials of his mission; it is very remarkable what God himself says of those signs, Exod. iv. 8: "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, nor hearken to the voice of the first sign (which was turning his rod into a serpent) that they will believe the voice of the latter sign;" (which was the making his hand leprous by putting it in his bosom;) God further adds, v. 9, "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river and pour upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land." Which of those operations was or was not above the force of all created beings, will, I suppose, be hard for any man, too hard for a poor brick-maker, to determine; and therefore the credit and certain reception of the mission, was annexed to neither of them, but the prevailing of their attestation was heightened by the increase of their number; two supernatural operations showing more power than one, and three more than two. God allowed that it was natural, that the marks of greater power should have a greater impression on the minds and belief of the spectators. Accordingly the Jews by this estimate judged of the miracles of our Saviour, John vii. 31, where we have this account: "And many of the people believed on him, and said, 'When Christ cometh will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?'" This, perhaps, as it is the plainest, so it is also the surest way to preserve the testimony of miracles in its due force to all sorts and degrees of people. For miracles being the basis on which divine mission is always established, and consequently that foundation on which the believers of any divine revelation must ultimately bottom their faith, this use of them would be lost, if not to all mankind, yet at least to the simple and illiterate, (which is the far greatest part,) if miracles be defined to be none but such divine operations as are in themselves beyond the power of all created beings, or at least operations contrary to the fixed and established laws of nature. For as to the latter of those, what are the fixed and established laws of nature, philosophers alone, if at least they, can pretend to determine. And if they are to be

operations performable only by divine power, I doubt whether any man, learned or unlearned, can, in most cases, be able to say of any particular operation that can fall under his senses, that it is certainly a miracle. Before he can come to that certainty, he must know that no created being has a power to perform it. We know good and bad angels have abilities and excellencies exceedingly beyond all our poor performances or narrow comprehensions. But to define what is the utmost extent of power that any of them has, is a bold undertaking of a man in the dark, that pronounces without seeing, and sets bounds in his

narrow cell to things at an infinite distance from his model and comprehension.

Such definitions therefore of miracles, however specious in discourse and theory, fail us when we come to use, and an application of them in particular cases.

These thoughts concerning miracles, were occasioned by my reading Mr. Fleetwood's Essay on Miracles, and the letter written to him on that subject. The one of them defining a miracle to be an extraordinary operation performable by God alone ; and the other writing of miracles without any definition of a miracle at all.

THE END.

THE
LIVES, ACTS, AND MARTYRDOMS
OF THE
H O L Y A P O S T L E S
OF OUR
S A V I O U R .

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

LIVES OF THE TWO EVANGELISTS,
ST. MARK AND ST. LUKE.

AS ALSO, A BRIEF ENUMERATION AND ACCOUNT OF THE APOSTLES AND
THEIR SUCCESSORS FOR THE FIRST THREE HUNDRED YEARS,
IN THE FIVE GREAT APOSTOLICAL CHURCHES.

✓
BY WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY THE
REV. HENRY STEBBING, M. A.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

THERE are certain eras in the history of mankind which require to be contemplated by many and various lights. This is especially the case with those which have derived their importance from giving birth to new moral systems, or from bringing into more conspicuous action the spiritual energies of our race. Political revolutions naturally form remarkable points in the annals of nations, because attended with events to which the tenacity of human sympathy would of itself give a durable importance: but in those changes which have reached the souls of men, a power is found to be at work, the dimmest discovery of which never fails to act with an elevating force on the mind of the discoverer. It is a noble property of the human conscience to be able to recognize the Almighty in creation; but this is so generally the endowment of man, that he is expected, even in his lowest condition, to act according to the light he may thence derive; whereas, to behold God in the secret workings of his providence, in the preparations and dispensings of his Spirit, is in the power only of those whom he has singularly favored with wisdom and the love of meditation. But in many of those events which compose the bulk of history, he effects his designs by the operation of agents which seem to partake almost as little of his living spirit as the matter which composes the machinery of the universe: and thus, in the study of history, a large portion of it may be read without demanding or eliciting any extraordinary proof of mental vigor; while, on the other hand, every passage which describes the new position into which mankind is put, by an enlargement of light and knowledge, demands, and when fairly contemplated, produces another and a higher state of mind. While however this is the fruit of that nobler class of historical truths, they also require a more copious illustration than others, to be brought within the scope and operation of our understanding. The higher we ascend in the regions of speculation, the firmer should be our supports; a rule the neglect of which has exemplified almost more than any thing else, the pride and folly of human reason; for, however otherwise it may appear to superficial minds, it is mainly owing to our negligence or indifference that there is not found in the very loftiest ranges of human thought, in those which it is supposed by the world exist only for wild hypothesis, firm footing for reason, and bright and visible temples of truth,—islands and continents lying beyond the vast ocean of uncertainty, which are not the less real because but rarely visited, nor the less beautiful because their starry galaxies have not yet been submitted to our calculations. The same remark holds good also in respect to the less speculative part of such inquiries. There is both a greater degree of evidence required, and a greater degree given, for unfolding

the moral truths of history; and where this is properly taken advantage of—when the mind, intent on the object of inquiry, gathers around it whatever can emit even the smallest ray of light, and history is examined as a body instinct with spirits which have their immortality within it, and will come forth and manifest themselves at the call of thought rightly spending its preparatory vigils; then the most important eras of our existence, those in which we have been perceptibly carried towards the great beacon-light of humanity, will enable us to observe those changes in their origin which have had the most beneficial influence on our state and nature, and to converse with the just men who, now made perfect, had then to struggle with temptations and difficulties like our own.

But glancing over the wide circle of human history, with the distinct purpose of discovering the periods at which mankind were most forcibly appealed to, and influenced, in their spiritual capacity, it is impossible for us not to find our attention at once arrested by the singular splendor which marks the birth and growth of Christianity. If we may find a type in creation, of that second great demonstration of divine love, we see the light which at first existed only in its own limitless fountains, and but a few scintillations of which before shone upon the world, then poured into a glorious orb to shed constant beauty and fertility over the universe; for the slightest examination of history shows, that what was before but uncertainly known in morals, thenceforward became fixed in principles; and that the truths which had been made palatable by their mixture with error, then became sufficiently attractive of themselves to secure the attention of the world. In the subsequent conflicts between truth and error, a change is perceptible both in the modes of attack and defence, and in the instruments employed for carrying on the struggle. Error dared not deny the unity of God—truth feared not to assert it as the foundation of all holiness: instead of marshalling the shadowy ranks of mythological powers, and looking for the soul of a deity under each broad shield of the abstract virtues, error itself acknowledged the pure and mighty attributes of Jehovah, only venturing to speak of the variety of his decrees; and truth, instead of appealing to tradition, or the innate notions of the soul, referred at once to rules which had received the sanction of Eternity. True it is, that the soil was not uniformly impregnated with the divine fire which glowed in Christianity; but the external change was sufficiently great and general to show that the world confessed the action of a new element; and from the commencement of its operation to the present hour, the effects have been evidently on the increase.

The examination of an era like this is equally interesting and important. It is one of the plain-

est duties of the intellectual and spiritual to do whatever lies in their power to bring it as distinctly as may be within the general range of men's understandings and sympathies. This has been allowed in every age of the Christian church; and its greatest ornaments have gladly employed their learning and their power of logical inquiry in this sacred labor. They have considered that while the Scriptures are the sole original of doctrine; while they alone are to be appealed to when we would correct error, heal schism, rebuke self-will, or do aught which belongs to the establishing of the faith, there are many sources, both of information and instruction, which, properly opened, may be made to pour copious streams of knowledge into the bosom of the Christian community. And to this conclusion they have been guided by the diversified character of Scripture itself; which, while it contains the fulness of doctrine contains the elements of much beside, which is to be wrought out by the industry of the human mind; or which, being sufficient for the immediate purpose in view, is to content the uninquisitive, but form to others the foundation of farther and more general inquiry. This is the case with many of those points which it was not consistent with the intentions of Christ to direct his messengers to teach as main parts of their doctrine; but which, nevertheless, as being in themselves true, could not fail to be involved in the rest, and are to be traced out by the laborious and spiritual watchfulness of true biblical students. An example of this is afforded us in the little stated, in direct terms, respecting the future condition of the redeemed, and the still less of the separate state of the soul: but by a diligent comparison of the passages which bear remotely on these subjects, by a careful treasuring up of all the overflowings of light from the main vessels of doctrine, the mind is rewarded with a far nearer approach to the knowledge of these hidden things than the cursory reader can suspect.

And while this is the case with respect to doctrine, it is also especially so in regard to the historical development of the gospel birth-time. The circumstances recorded are separated widely from each other by matter of deeper importance, in the main, than the facts themselves. Thus attention is perpetually drawn from the incidents of the history to the doctrines of the system, and this more than is the case with any other narrative in existence; if we except, perhaps, some few passages of national history, which describe the rise or establishment of fundamental laws. Hence arises the necessity for especial care in the study of evangelical history, which has, indeed, an importance in relation to doctrine itself not always duly estimated; for, not to mention that which is obvious to all, its support of the doctrine, or its illustration of doctrine, it is the soil out of which the seed of eternal truth and life first sprung, embodied in visible forms: the gospel being the incarnation of truth, and the history which it delivers, the development of that new Being thus, as it were, born into the world.

On examining the several books of the New Testament, with a view to the discovery of the characters of the several actors in the events it describes, it is found that a far more distinct por-

traiture can be drawn of those we are most anxious to contemplate than would otherwise be imagined. Christ himself stands revealed in all the fulness of celestial purity and goodness to the eye of patient meditation: but it is not by his words taken singly, nor by the separate consideration of particular miracles; it is by bringing them together; by passing with him from the crowded shores of Jordan to the solitary wilderness; and from the wilderness to the populous towns and villages of Galilee; by accompanying him in spirit through his trials and his triumphs; bringing them, as near as may be, within the focus of a single glance of faith, that the character of Christ, that Christ himself, is known in the manner described by the evangelist John; that is, so as to be seen and handled as the word of life. The same, in a lower sense, is true of his chief apostles. St. Peter, for example, had a character distinctly marked by several peculiarities of mind and temper; but it is only on one or two main facts of his history that the ordinary reader of the gospel fixes his attention; and the other circumstances respecting him being neglected, his zeal and his fall, the two extreme points, are so brought together as to destroy the possibility of presenting him to the mind in the proper proportions of human character. On taking, however, into consideration the ordinary account given of his countrymen, the Galileans, described as naturally fierce, bold, and impatient of contradiction; adding to this, a due weighing of the circumstances attending the life of a fisherman, exposed to many perils, often called to reflection by the startling phenomena of the deep: then passing to the view of the incidents which occurred after his call; his apparent attachment to home; his eagerness to avail himself of his privileges as a disciple of Christ; the ready surrender which he made of his mind to the doctrines of his master; his astonishment on Tabor; his weariness in Gethsemane; his terror in the judgment-hall, will be seen in their natural bearings and relations. To these particulars may be added, the incidents recorded of him after the gift of the Holy Spirit, of which sufficient are related to place him distinctly before us, and to show that the groundwork of his personal character still retained its strong, original peculiarities. Then, leaving the narrative, we may turn to his epistles, which cement and admirably illustrate whatever is found written of him in the Scripture history. Glowing with all the fervor natural to his soul, deeply imbued with the associations of his venerable faith in the prophets, and elevated by intimate acquaintance with the sublimest mysteries of spiritual religion, we hear him speaking the language which might be looked for from one who had not only been on the mount of transfiguration, but had proclaimed the divinity of Christ, and had received gifts of knowledge proportionable to his faith. But there is a striking feature in these epistles biographically considered; they abound in maxims remarkable for sedateness and cautiousness of spirit: they exhort to duties which only the most self-subdued heart can understand; and the quick, impetuous Peter is heard admonishing with a mildness and serenity of argument which might only have been looked for from the

most gentle of human spirits. Light is thus thrown upon the disposition of Peter, and upon the state of his mind when he had passed the greatest portion of his career as a preacher of the gospel; and we are hereby enabled to contemplate his completed character. In doing this, we find it retaining all the elements which gave it a degree of rude grandeur even at the commencement of his course; which made us feel, when he first pronounced his most sublime confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!" and when he dared to attempt a pathway over an angry sea, because it led to his Lord, that a man had risen before us destined for great purposes: we find him neither less ardent or less courageous; neither less affectionate nor less susceptible; but these, his original characteristics, are all nobly blended with the loftier attributes of an apostle confirmed in the faith, filled with the wisdom of experience, and grown familiar with the great Spirit of Truth, by long and intimate communion with him in every scene and circumstance of life.

On looking again at the account given of St. Paul, though we find the circumstances related of his ministry more numerous, and set forth in a more distinct order, they plainly require to be brought together by great care, and with all the succinctness which the energy of inquiry can give them, before the apostles of the Gentiles will be seen in the true light which history, properly employed, may render. In this case, the great effort required is to bring the brief but important narrative of his labors into immediate connection with his own compositions; a point which may be reached with little or no difficulty so far as the mechanical or formal arrangement is concerned; but to effect which, so as to make them mutually illustrate each other, is a work of skill, and the reward of thoughtfulness. The history given by St. Luke is close and rapid; but we learn from it sufficient to understand the early zealotry, the deep enthusiasm, the strength of Paul's character, which confirmed him in his early principles against every appeal short of the strongest demonstrations of the will of God. Striking, however, as might be the portrait drawn of this wonderful man, had we only his history as recorded in the Acts, that which is most admirable in his character would be but weakly exhibited through this unassisted medium. It is in his epistles, and that in many passages which an inattentive reader would pass over, without discovering either their historical or spiritual force, that the peculiarities, the bright and glorious individuality of St. Paul is to be found displayed. Whatever is said by critics of those marvellous idioms of true poetry which penetrate the mysteries of our nature, and are so precious as indications of large classes of truths, may be said of numerous incidental expressions and allusions in the writings of this apostle; and by observing these, we arrive at a knowledge not only of his labors, of his energy and perseverance, but of his intellectual being, as wrought upon, and possessed by the Spirit of holiness whom he, on the other hand, (and in this consisted the great mystery of his renewed nature,) sought to possess. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that *I may apprehend* that for which also *I am ap-*

prehended." A sentiment embodying the highest doctrine of evangelical righteousness, and made palpable to the understanding of every man by this deeply pathetic confession of the apostle.

Scripture history, when thus studied, affords more distinct portraits of the characters it mentions than many of the most celebrated of secular narratives; but it is to be regretted, that in the general reading of the divine records, that which is historical is not less neglected than what is purely doctrinal or monitory; and thus the conception of those characters which the Scriptures set forth in the two-fold light of chosen agents in the great works of Providence, and examples to the universal race of man, is too indefinite either to move the heart, or to fill up the space they are intended to occupy in the argument of faith. It was the consideration of these circumstances which first led to the composition of lives of the Saviour and his immediate followers, founded on the relations of Scripture, but intended to present the principal facts and minute particulars, which lie widely dispersed through the books of Revelation, in a condensed and consecutive order. In undertaking this task, however, even the most careful of writers would naturally inquire, whether there were not other sources of information which might be safely employed to furnish the means of minuter description than those which ought to be looked for in a record of revelations and doctrines, rather than of events. Clear and impressive as were the forms which rose before the contemplative eye of the spiritualized student, it could not be denied that the bolder the hand seemed by which the outline was drawn, the deeper the tints which filled it up, the more attractive and satisfactory would the whole be likely to prove to the ordinary reader. Hence sprang the mingled necessity and temptation which gave such value to the traditions which arose, like a thick mist, sometimes from the natural heat of the current of events, at others from its impurity and stagnation. In both cases the use made of them necessarily depended on the honesty and the skill of those who employed them in illustration or continuation of the Scripture narrative. But unfortunately, the credulity of some, and the artifice of others, speedily brought the use of traditionary remains into disrepute; and it soon became a question with those whose stern worship of truth prevented their discriminating between them, whether the traditionary was not the same as the fabulous.

This is a question of immense importance in the history of our religion; and it need scarcely be mentioned, that some of the bitterest controversies in which different divisions of Christians have been engaged, derived much of their rancor from the doubts attending this subject. But so far as the biography of the eminent founders of our religion is concerned, the question admits of limitations which bring it within the possibility of solution.—It is not to establish disputed points of doctrine that we desire to see these chosen and, without a metaphor, heaven-born men as they lived and acted; but to be soothed, elevated, and encouraged in our struggles by their example. The appeal to tradition, therefore, for biographical purposes, has none of the suspicion which attends it when employed to serve any partial design; and

to this consideration, which removes one very material class of objections to its employment, we may add another which enlarges the sphere out of which the writer may, with safety and honesty, draw materials for his purpose; that is to say, there is probability on the side of tradition in respect to its biographical uses; and it can almost always be judged of by the rule of verisimilitude, when limited to this employment. It is an acknowledged fact, that the writers of the New Testament selected the circumstances they recorded out of a much larger number of incidents than it came within their province to detail: were it not, therefore, a sacred duty to sacrifice every object to the perfect preservation of Scripture from the least mixture with even possible error, it might be argued, that it is not probable, that the striking and powerfully interesting events connected with the establishment of the gospel, could any of them be lost; and that we may therefore look with confidence on many of those traditionary relations which purport to be details of occurrences left unnoticed by the inspired penmen.

But the judicious jealousy with which the purity of the gospel is watched, has raised a barrier against the introduction of such auxiliaries to the Scripture narrative. Where this narrative ceases, the case becomes different, and the probability of the tradition remains without any prohibition to its employment. The character of the period immediately succeeding the first founding of the church, was singularly fitted for the production of incidents not sufficiently important to demand a continuance of the sacred and inspired narrative, but in every way calculated to excite and secure attention. When the apostles and first disciples left the original seat of the gospel, to spread its glad tidings over the world, they did not perform their allotted duties with so little energy as to remain obscure among the people to whom they ministered. Fulfilling the precept of their glorified Master, they became beacons of truth, shining from the eminence on which their election had placed them, over wide regions of gloom and sterility; but not freed from suffering, they were also set forth to men and to angels a spectacle of much and patient endurance. In both these respects the apostles could not fail of being scrutinized by large classes of observers, who moved by their doctrines, startled by their miracles, or enraged by their severe rebukes, would not easily forget their addresses, or lose sight of the circumstances which attended their appeals. The personal appearance, the voice and gesture even of such men, would long have a permanent place in the memory; and many a saying, many a minute action that had sunk deep into the hearts of retired, devout converts, would, when the spirit became accustomed to the new and overpowering thoughts which the gospel message had awakened, come back upon the mind with a long, fresh train of impressive associations.

It may fairly be concluded from these considerations, that for some time after the apostles lived, the memory of Christians was richly stored with particulars respecting them: that these particulars would form the subject of frequent conversation among believers: that they would be communicated from one division of the church to an-

other, by the interchange of letters, and the journeyings of ministers and missionaries, is equally probable; and to suppose that this species of information could be quickly lost, or that it could become so thoroughly corrupted by the intermixture of fable as to be unworthy of notice in a subsequent age, is to do violence to the rules on which all evidence must rest, which is in any way transmitted through channels not sealed and guarded by formal testaments.

We would gather from this, that a biographer of the apostles, and their first successors, has a wide field open to him which he may traverse with safety and profit; but at the same time imposing on him this strict and uniformly applicable rule, that that species of traditional information only is to be made use of, which is found adopted by those who lived at a period sufficiently near the apostolic times to judge of its origin and its authors. Taking this as a primary principle in the selection of incidents, and in every instance examining them by the rule of analogy and verisimilitude, there will be little danger of our adopting any of those weak inventions by which the superstition of former ages was amused and fostered.

Lives of the apostles were written at an early period; but they are for the most part filled with accounts evidently intended to excite the attention of weak, uninstructed minds, and possessing no claim to belief. The period was favorable to such productions; the excitement occasioned by extraordinary events requiring all those modifying principles which are only found in the purest faith and piety; and creating, consequently, a very wide field for the employment of invention. This is amply shown by the rapid multiplication of writings, purporting to have been of apostolic origin. Even before the end of the first century new gospels had been forged, and the acts of Christ and his apostles were described in books which, claiming reverence by the nature of their contents, were not less calculated to interest than to deceive. Such were the gospel according to the Hebrews, and the gospel according to the Egyptians; both of which furnished sufficient authorities to support very numerous sects in dangerous errors: nor were they altogether deprived of their pretensions to credit, till after the canon of Scripture had been some time settled by diligent and cautious inquiry. Besides these, there were the gospel of St. Peter, the gospel of Philip, the gospel of James, and of every other apostle, not excepting the traitor Judas himself, whose supposed composition is said to have been received by the Gajanites, of whom, strange to relate, he was the titular saint. The acts of the apostles, subsequent to the time of Christ, furnished materials for an equal number of similar supposititious narratives. It is commonly believed that the first work of this nature was the production of a disciple of St. Paul, and that the writer was detected in his falsehoods by the knowledge of St. John, who still survived. The chief source, however, of fabulous traditions, was that heretical spirit which so early infected the church. Most of the spurious gospels had their origin with the Ebionites, the Manicheans, or some other powerful sect. From the same source proceeded the Acts of the Apostles, which pretended to describe, in particular terms, the labors and jour-

neyings of those devout men to the end of their days.

The whole of these works were rejected by the church; and private Christians were warned against their dangerous errors by the many acute and pious scholars who devoted themselves to the examination of whatever assumed the title of an inspired production. Conferences between the believers of one city and another, and the succession of highly devout and gifted men, as bishops of the several infant establishments, led gradually to the clear and firm determination of the Scripture canon. Numerous synods, held in subsequent ages, reinvestigated with minute particularity the reason upon which this rule was established; and a line was drawn, which the boldness of heresy has never since been able to pass. But while no writer, of common penetration or honesty, would venture to look for materials in these counterfeit narratives, there is still a source of information open, to which suspicion cannot justly attach.—This is found in the writings of those fathers who lived in the first three centuries, to the end of which period much even of the unwritten history of the apostolic age might be carried by a natural and easy tradition. The epistle generally ascribed to Barnabas, though evidently unimportant as to doctrine, deserves to be regarded in a much higher light when consulted simply for historical illustration: the same may be said of the remains of Papias, whose theoretical conceits, though they greatly diminish our confidence in the strength of his capacity, ought certainly not to deprive him of all credit as a witness, when the circumstances he mentions have no intrinsic improbability. To refuse to believe a writer on a matter of fact, because he appears incapable of acutely discerning between truth and error in theoretical or purely intellectual subjects, would be to introduce a rule that would render it impossible, in most cases, to get evidence on any subject whatever. In the fragments of such men as Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, the least glimpses of information are of inestimable value; nor is it to be supposed, when coming to a later period, that writers like Origen, or Cyprian, or Chrysostom, or the historian Eusebius or Theodoret, would not avail themselves of the most credible traditions, or that before adopting them, they would not fairly examine their claims to belief. That much uncertainty on several points of interest must remain, after every source of information has been investigated, cannot be denied. But this is not to prevent our using the utmost diligence to collect whatever lies within the reach of learning: and it will generally be found, that when the combined caution and sound erudition of Christian scholars are taken as a guide on this subject, that both instruction and satisfaction will follow in the track they have pursued.

To reflecting minds, the biography of Christ's apostles traced out according to these rules, will afford many a refreshing and elevating theme for thought. These messengers of Christ to the world were not teachers merely; they were the foundation-stones of the vast spiritual edifice which Christ and the Holy Spirit will continue to enlarge, till it is commensurate with the prescribed plan of the heavenly Jerusalem: they formed the natural body

of the church ere the might of Divine power descended to present it to, and to make it one with Christ; they became, when his prayer was answered, "sanctify them through thy truth," the types of Christian believers in all ages and countries of the world; and in their journeyings and sufferings they show how, according to the language of St. Paul the followers of the Redeemer were to go on, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in the flesh." And this contemplation of their primary calling and dignity, will conduct the mind to some apprehension of the glory they will be seen enjoying when, as the still supremely exalted, and eldest born brethren of Christ, they will judge, on their thrones, the twelve tribes of Israel.

The eminent writer of the following memoirs merits all the confidence due to distinguished worth and ability. His own history may be given in a few lines. He was born at the close of the sixteenth, or beginning of the seventeenth century, at Pickwell, in Leicestershire; the living of which parish was held by his father, a man of learning and piety, who bore his full share in the troubles endured by the clergy during the civil wars. Our author received his education at St. John's College, Cambridge; and took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1656. He proceeded to the degree of Master at the regular period; and in 1662 obtained the vicarage of Islington, and not long after the dignity of Chaplain in Ordinary to Charles the Second. In 1672 he took the degree of D. D., to which he was also admitted at the sister university; and in 1681, his merits as a scholar obtained for him the rectory of Allhallows, and a canonry at Windsor. But the numerous calls which his London preferments made upon him were found prejudicial to the important labors he had undertaken as an historian of Christianity; and he gladly accepted, in exchange for Islington and Allhallows, the vicarage of Isleworth, to which he retired in the year 1690; and where he continued to enjoy for many years the leisure which he employed so greatly to the advantage of religion and learning. His death took place on the 4th of August, 1713; and he lies buried in the parish church of Islington, where a monument is placed to his memory.

The works of this distinguished scholar are numerous. The chief are, the *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*, or, a *Literary History of Ecclesiastical Writers*; his "*Lives of the Apostles*;" the "*Apostolici, or the History of the Lives, Acts, Deaths, and Martyrdoms of those who were contemporary with, or immediately succeeded the apostles, as also of the most eminent of the Primitive Fathers for the first three hundred years*;" the "*Primitive Christianity, or the Religion of the Ancient Christians*;" the "*Tabulæ Ecclesiasticæ, or Tables of the Ecclesiastical Writers*;" "*A Dissertation concerning the Government of the Ancient church, by Bishops, Metropolitans, and Patriarchs*; those particularly concerning the Ancient Power and Jurisdiction of the Bishops of Rome, and the encroachment of that upon other Sees, especially the See of Constantinople;" "*Ecclesiastici, or the History of the Lives, Acts, Deaths, and Writings, of the most eminent Fathers of the church, that flourished in*

the fourth century : wherein, among other things, an account is given of the rise, growth, and progress of Arianism, and all other sects of that age, descending from it : together with an introduction, containing an Historical account of the State of Paganism under the first Christian Emperor :” and lastly, the “*Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus*,” which is a succinct summary of the principal contents of the *Historia Literaria*, and an improvement on the Ecclesiastical Tables.

Cave’s early estimation as a scholar on the continent is proved by the reprint of his chief work, the *Historia Literaria*, at Geneva ; and of his Ta-

bulæ Ecclesiasticæ at Hamburgh : nor can any student of religious history fail of finding in his works most important helps to investigation. Jortin, a writer more witty than acute, and better skilled to perform the part of a compiler than to reason or investigate, has affected to speak sarcastically of Cave’s deep attention to the fathers : but the careful reader well knows how to appreciate the respective merits of these men ; and even a cursory glance of the “*Historia Literaria*” of the one, and of the “*Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*” of the other, will at once show how little pretensions Jortin had to act the part of a critic in regard to this profound scholar.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It will not, I suppose, seem improbable to the reader, when I tell him with how much reluctance and unwillingness I set upon this undertaking, intimately conscious as I was to my own unfitness for such a work at any time, much more when clogged with many habitual infirmities and distempers. I considered the difficulty of the thing itself, perhaps not capable of being well managed by a much better pen than mine ; few of the ancient monuments of the church being extant, and little of this nature in those few that are. Indeed, I could not but think it reasonable, that all possible honor should be done to those that first “preached the gospel of peace, and brought glad tidings of good things ;” that it was fit men should be taught how much they were obliged to those excellent persons, who were willing at so dear a rate to plant Christianity in the world ; who they were, and what was that piety and that patience, that charity and that zeal, which made them to be revered while they lived, and their memories ever since to be honorably celebrated through the world ; infinitely beyond the glories of Alexander, and the triumphs of a Pompey or a Cæsar. But then how this should be done out of those few imperfect memoirs that have escaped the general shipwreck of church antiquities ; and much more by so rude and unskilful a hand as mine, appeared, I confess, a very difficult task, and next door to impossible. These, with some other considerations, made me a long time obstinately resolve against it, till, being overcome by importunity, I yielded to do it as I was able, and as the nature of the thing would bear.

That which I primarily designed to myself, was to draw down the history of the New Testament, especially from our Lord’s death ; to inquire into the first originals and plantations of the Christian church by the ministry of the apostles, the success

of their doctrine, the power and conviction of their miracles, their infinite labors and hardships, and the dreadful sufferings which they underwent ; to consider in what instances of piety and virtue they ministered to our imitation, and served the purposes of religion and a holy life. Indeed the accounts that are left us of these things are very short and inconsiderable ; sufficient possibly to excite the appetite, not to allay the hunger of an importunate inquirer into these matters. A consideration that might give us just occasion to lament the irreparable loss of those primitive records, which the injury of time hath deprived us of ; the substance being gone, and little left us but the shell and carcass. Had we the writings of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis,* and scholar (says Irenæus) to St. John ; wherein, as himself tells us, he set down what he had learnt from those who had familiarly conversed with the apostles, the sayings and discourses of Andrew and Peter, of Philip and Thomas, &c. ; had we the ancient Commentaries of Hegesippus, Clemens Alexandrinus’s *Institutions*, Africanus’s *Chronography*, and some others, the reader might expect more entire and particular relations. But, alas ! these are long since perished, and little besides the names of them transmitted to us. Nor should we have had most of that little which is left us, had not the commendable care and industry of Eusebius preserved it to us. And if he complained, in his time, (when those writings were extant,) that towards the composing of his history he had only some few particular accounts here and there left by the ancients of their times, what cause have we to complain, when even those little portions have been ravished from us ? So that he that would build a work of this nature, must look upon himself as condemned to a

* Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 2. p. 4.

kind of Egyptian task, to make brick without straw, at least to pick it up where he can find it, though after all it amounts to a very slender parcel. Which as it greatly hinders the beauty and completeness of the structure, so does it exceedingly multiply the labor and difficulty. For by this means I have been forced to gather up those little fragments of antiquity, that lie dispersed in the writings of the ancients, thrown some into this corner, and others into that; which I have at length put together, like the pieces of a broken statue, that it might have at least some kind of resemblance of the person whom it designs to represent.

Had I thought good to have traded in idle and frivolous authors, Abdias Babylonius, "The Passions of Peter and Paul," Joachim Perionius, Peter de Natalibus, and such like, I might have presented the reader with a larger, not a better account. But, besides the averseness of my nature to falsehoods and trifles, especially wherein the honor of the Christian religion is concerned, I knew the world to be wiser at this time of day, than to be imposed upon by pious frauds, and cheated with ecclesiastical romances and legendary reports. For this reason, I have more fully and particularly insisted upon the lives of the two first apostles, so great a part of them being secured by an unquestionable authority; and have presented the larger portions of the sacred history, many times to very minute circumstances of action. And I presume the wise and judicious reader will not blame me, for choosing rather to enlarge upon a story which I knew to be infallibly true, than to treat him with those which there was cause enough to conclude to be certainly false.

The reader will easily discern, that the authors I make use of are not all of the same rank and size. Some of them are divinely inspired, whose authority is sacred, and their reports rendered not only credible, but unquestionable, by that infallible and

unerring spirit that presided over them. Others such, of whose faith and testimony, especially in matters of fact, there is no just cause to doubt; I mean the genuine writings of the ancient fathers; or those, which, though unduly assigned to this or that particular father, are yet generally allowed to be ancient, and their credit not to be despised, because their proper parent is not certainly known. Next to these came the writers of the middle and later ages of the church, who, though below the former in point of credit, have yet some particular advantages that recommend them to us. Such I account Symeon Metaphrastes, Nicephorus Callistus, the *Menæa* and *Menologies* of the Greek church, &c., wherein, though we meet with many vain and improbable stories, yet may we rationally expect some real and substantial accounts of things; especially seeing they had the advantage of many ancient and ecclesiastical writings extant in their times, which to us are utterly lost. Though even these too I have never called in, but in the want of more ancient and authentic writers. As for others, if any passages occur either in themselves of doubtful and suspected credit, or borrowed from spurious and uncertain authors, they are always introduced or dismissed with some kind of censure or remark; that the most easy and credulous reader may know what to trust to, and not fear being secretly surprised into a belief of doubtful and fabulous reports. And now, after all, I am sufficiently sensible how lank and thin this account is, nor can the reader be less satisfied with it than I am myself; and I have only this piece of justice and charity to beg of him, that he would suspend his censure till he has taken a little pains to inquire into the state of the times and things I write of; and then, however he may challenge my prudence in undertaking it, he will not, I hope, see reason to charge me with want of care and faithfulness in the pursuance of it.

LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

INTRODUCTION.

1. JESUS CHRIST, the great apostle and high-priest of our profession, being appointed by God to be the supreme ruler and governor of his church, was, like Moses, faithful in all his house; but with this honorable advantage, that Moses was faithful as a servant, Christ as a son over his own house, which he erected, established, and governed with all possible care and diligence. Nor could he give a greater instance either of his fidelity towards God or his love and kindness to the souls of men, than that after he had purchased a family to himself, and could now no longer upon earth manage its interests in his own person, he would not return back to heaven till he had constituted several orders and officers in his church, who might superintend and conduct its affairs, and according to the various circumstances of its state, administer to the needs and exigencies of his family. Accordingly therefore, "he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."* The first and prime class of men is that of apostles: God had set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, &c. First apostles, as far in office as honor before the rest, their election more immediate, their commission more large and comprehensive, the powers and privileges wherewith they were furnished greater and more honorable. Prophecy, the gift of miracles and expelling dæmons, the order of pastors and teachers, were all spiritual powers, and ensigns of great authority, *ἀλλα τούτων πάντων μείζων ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ ἢ ἀποστολική*, says Chrysostom; "but the apostolic eminency is far greater than all these;" which therefore he calls a spiritual consulship: an apostle having as great pre-eminence above all other officers in the church, as the consul had above all other magistrates in Rome. These apostles were a few select persons whom our Lord chose out of the rest, to devolve part of the government upon their shoulders, and to depute for the first planting and settling Christianity in the world: "he chose twelve, whom he named apostles;"† of whose lives and acts being to give an historical account in the following work, it may not, possibly, be unuseful to premise some general remarks concerning them, not respecting this or that particular person, but

of a general relation to the whole: wherein we shall especially take notice of the importance of the word, the nature of the employment, the fitness and qualification of the persons, and the duration and continuance of the office.

2. The word *ἀποστολος*, or *sent*, is among ancient writers applied either to things, actions, or persons. To things: thus, those dismissory letters that were granted to such who appealed from an inferior to a superior judicature, were in the language of the Roman laws usually called *apostoli*: Thus, a packet-boat was styled *ἀποστολον πλοιον*, because sent up and down for advice and despatch of business. Thus, though in somewhat a different sense, the lesson taken out of the epistles is in the ancient Greek liturgies, called *ἀποστολος*; because usually taken out of the apostles' writings. Sometimes it is applied to actions, and so imports no more than mission, or the very act of sending. Thus the setting out a fleet or a naval expedition, was wont to be called *ἀποστολος*; so Suidas tells us, that as the persons designed for the care and management of the fleet were called *ἀποστολεις*, so the very sending forth of the ships themselves, *αἱ τῶν νηῶν ἐκπομπαι*, were styled *ἀποστολοι*. Lastly; what principally falls under our present consideration, it is applied to persons; and so imports no more than a messenger, a person sent upon some special errand, for the discharge of some peculiar affair in his name that sent him. Thus Epaphroditus is called the apostle or messenger of the Philippians,* when sent by them to St. Paul at Rome. Thus Titus and his companions are styled *ἀποστολαι* "the messengers of the churches." So our Lord; "He that is sent," *ἀποστολος*, an apostle or messenger "is not greater than he that sent him." This, then, being the common notion of the word, our Lord fixes it to a particular use, applying it to those select persons whom he had made choice of to act by that peculiar authority and commission which he had derived upon them. Twelve, whom he also named apostles; that is, commissioners, those who were to be ambassadors for Christ, to be sent up and down the world in his name, to plant the faith, to govern and superintend the church at present, and, by their wise and prudent settlement of affairs, to provide for the future exigencies of the church.

3. The next thing then to be considered is the nature of their office; and under this inquiry we shall make these following remarks. First, it is not to be doubted but that our Lord in founding this office had some respect to the state of things in the Jewish church; I mean not only in general,

* Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13.

† Luke vi. 13.

* Phil. ii. 25; 2 Cor. viii. 23; John xiii. 16.

that there should be superior and subordinate officers, as there were superior and inferior orders under the Mosaic dispensation; but that herein he had an eye to some usage and custom common among them. Now, among the Jews, as all messengers were called apostles; so were they wont to despatch some with peculiar letters of authority and commission, whereby they acted as proxies and deputies of those that sent them: thence their proverb "Every man's apostle is as himself;" that is, whatever he does is looked upon to be as firm and valid as if the person himself had done it. Thus, when Saul was sent by the Sanhedrim to Damascus to apprehend the Jewish converts, he was furnished with letters from the high-priest, enabling him to act as his commissary in that matter. Indeed Epiphanius tells us of a sort of persons called apostles, who were assessors and counsellors to the Jewish patriarch; constantly attending upon him, to advise him in matters pertaining to the law; and sent by him (as he intimates) sometimes to inspect and reform the manners of the priests and Jewish clergy, and the irregularities of country synagogues, with commission to gather the tithes and first-fruits due in all the provinces under his jurisdiction. Such apostles we find mentioned both by Julian the emperor,* in an epistle to the Jews, and in a law of the emperor Honorius, employed by the patriarch to gather once a year the *aurum coronarium*, or crown gold, a tribute annually paid by them to the Roman emperors. But these apostles could not, under that notion, be extant in our Saviour's time; though sure we are there was then something like it. Philo the Jew, more than once mentioning the *ιεροπομπαι καθ' εκαστον ενιαντον χρυσον κι αργυρον πλειον κομιζοντες ιεις το ιερον, τον αθροισαντα εκ των απαρων*, "The sacred messengers annually sent to collect the holy treasure paid by way of first-fruits, and to carry it to the temple at Jerusalem." However, our Lord in conformity to the general custom of those times, of appointing apostles or messengers, as their proxies and deputies to act in their names, called and denominated those apostles, whom he peculiarly chose to represent his person, to communicate his mind and will to the world, and to act as ambassadors or commissioners in his room and stead.

4. Secondly, we observe that the persons thus deputed by our Saviour were not left uncertain, but reduced to a fixed definite number, confined to the just number of twelve; "he ordained twelve that they should be with him."† A number that seems to carry something of mystery and peculiar design in it, as appears in that the apostles were so careful upon the fall of Judas immediately to supply it. The fathers are very wide and different in their conjectures about the reason of it. St. Augustine‡ thinks our Lord herein had respect to the four quarters of the world, which were to be called by the preaching of the gospel, which being multiplied by three (to denote the Trinity, in whose name they were to be called) make twelve. Tertullian will have them typified by the twelve fountains in Elim; the apostles

being sent out to water and refresh the dry, thirsty world with the knowledge of the truth; by the twelve precious stones in Aaron's breast-plate, to illuminate the church, the garment which Christ our great high-priest has put on; by the twelve stones which Joshua chose out of Jordan, to lay up within the ark of the testament, respecting the firmness and solidity of the apostles' faith, their being chosen by the true Jesus or Joshua at their baptism in Jordan, and their being admitted into the inner sanctuary of his covenant. By others we are told, that it was shadowed out by the twelve spies taken out of every tribe, and sent to discover the land of promise; or by the twelve gates of the city in Ezekiel's vision: or by the twelve bells appendent to Aaron's garment, "their sound going out into all the world, and their words unto the ends of the earth." But it were endless, and to very little purpose, to reckon up all the conjectures of this nature, there being scarce any one number of twelve mentioned in the Scripture, which is not by some of the ancients adapted and applied to this of the twelve apostles, wherein an ordinary fancy might easily enough pick out a mystery. That which seems to put in the most rational plea is, that our Lord, being now about to form a new spiritual commonwealth, a kind of mystical Israel, pitched upon this number in conformity either to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of the twelve tribes of Israel, or to the twelve *φωλαρχαι*, or chief heads, as standing rulers of those tribes among the Jews; as we shall afterwards possibly more particularly remark.* Thirdly, these apostles were immediately called and sent by Christ himself, elected out of the body of his disciples and followers, and received their commission from his own mouth. Indeed, Matthias was not one of the first election, being taken in upon Judas's apostacy, after our Lord's ascension into heaven. But besides that he had been one of the seventy disciples, called and sent out by our Saviour, that extraordinary declaration of the divine will and pleasure that appeared in determining his election, was in a manner equivalent to the first election. As for St. Paul, he was not one of the twelve, taken in as a supernumerary apostle; but yet an apostle as well as they, and that "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ;"† as he pleads his own cause against the insinuations of those impostors who traduced him as an apostle only at the second hand; whereas he was immediately called by Christ as well as they, and in a more extraordinary manner; they were called by him while he was yet in his state of meanness and humiliation; he, when Christ was now advanced upon the throne, and appeared to him encircled with those glorious emanations of brightness and majesty which he was not able to endure. I observe no more concerning this, than that an immediate call has ever been accounted so necessary to give credit and reputation to their doctrine, that the most notorious impostors have pretended to it. Thus Manes the founder of the Manichean sect, was wont in his epistles to style himself the apostle of Jesus Christ, as pretending himself to be the person whom our Lord had promised to

* Epist. 25, p. 153.

† Mark, iii. 15.

‡ Serm. iii. in Psalm 103, Col. 1192, tom. viii. vid. in Psalm 59 Col. 603.

* See St. Peter's Life, sec. 3, num. 2. † Gal. i. 1.

send into the world, and that accordingly the Holy Ghost was actually sent in him; and therefore he constituted twelve disciples always to attend his person, in imitation of the number of the apostolic college. And how often the Turkish impostor does upon this account call himself the apostle of God, every one that has but once seen the Alcoran is able to tell.

5. Fourthly, the main work and employment of these apostles was to preach the gospel, to establish Christianity, and to govern the church that was to be founded, as Christ's immediate deputies and vicegerents: they were to instruct men in the doctrines of the gospel, to disciple the world, and to baptize and initiate men into the faith of Christ; and to constitute and ordain guides and ministers of religion, persons peculiarly set apart for holy ministrations, to censure and punish obstinate and contumacious offenders, to compose and overrule disorders and divisions, to command or countermand as occasion was, being vested with an extraordinary authority and power of disposing things for the edification of the church. This office the apostles never exercised in its full extent and latitude during Christ's residence upon earth; for though upon their election he sent them forth to preach and to baptize, yet this was only a narrow and temporary employment, and they quickly returned to their private stations; the main power being still executed and administered by Christ himself, the complete exercise whereof was not actually devolved upon them till he was ready to leave the world: for then it was that he told them, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."* Whereby he conferred in some proportion the same authority upon them which he himself had derived from his Father. Fifthly, this commission given to the apostles was unlimited and universal, not only in respect of power, as enabling them to discharge all acts of religion, relating either to ministry or government; but in respect of place, not confining them to this or that particular province, but leaving them the whole world as their diocese to preach in, they being *destinati nationibus magistri*, in Tertullian's phrase, designed to be the masters and instructors of all nations: so runs their commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;"† that is, to all men, the *πᾶσι κτίσις* of the Evangelist answering to the **כָּל הַבְּרִיאָה** amongst the Jews, "to all creatures;" whereby they used to denote all men in general, but especially the Gentiles in opposition to the Jews. Indeed, while our Saviour lived, the apostolical ministry extended no farther than Judea; but he being gone to heaven, the partition wall was broken down, and their way was open into all places and countries. And herein how admirably did the Christian economy transcend the Jewish dispensation! The preaching of the prophets, like the light that comes in at the window, was confined only to the house of Israel; while the doctrine of the gospel preached by the apostles, was like the light of the sun in the firmament, that diffused its beams and propagated its heat and influence into

all quarters of the world; "their sound going out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." It is true, for the more prudent and orderly management of things, they are generally said by the ancients to have divided the world into so many quarters and portions, to which they were severally to betake themselves; Peter to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, &c.; St. John to Asia; St. Andrew to Scythia, &c. But they did not strictly tie themselves to those particular provinces that were assigned them, but, as occasion was, made excursions into other parts; though for the main they had a more peculiar inspection over those parts that were allotted to them, usually residing at some principal city of the province; as St. John at Ephesus, St. Philip at Hierapolis, &c.; whence they might have a more convenient prospect of affairs round about them; and hence it was that these places more peculiarly got the title of apostolical churches, because first planted, or eminently watered and cultivated by some apostles, *matrices et originales fidei*, as Tertullian calls them; "mother churches and the originals of the faith;" because here the Christian doctrine was first sown, and hence planted and propagated to the countries round about; "*Ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt, à quibus traducem fidei et semina doctrine, cetera exinde ecclesia mutuata sunt,*" as his own words are.

6. In pursuance of this general commission, we find the apostles, not long after our Lord's ascension, traversing almost all parts of the then known world: St. Andrew in Scythia, and those northern countries; St. Thomas and Bartholomew in India; St. Simon and St. Mark in Africa, Egypt, and the parts of Libya and Mauritania; St. Paul, and probably Peter, and some others, in the farthest regions of the west; and all this done in the space of less than forty years; viz., before the destruction of the Jewish state, by Titus and the Roman army. For so our Lord had expressly foretold, that "the gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, before the end came;"‡ that is, the end of the Jewish state, which the apostles, a little before, had called "the end of the world,"§ *συντελεία του αἰῶνος*, the shutting up or consummation of the age, the putting a final period to that present state and dispensation that the Jews were under. And indeed strange it is to consider, that in so few years these evangelical messengers should overrun all countries: with what an incredible swiftness did the Christian faith, like lightning, pierce from east to west, and diffuse itself over all quarters of the world; and that not only unassisted by any secular advantages, but in defiance of the most fierce and potent opposition, which every where set itself against it! It is true, the impostors of Mahomet in a very little time gained a great part of the East; but besides that this was not comparable to the universal spreading of Christianity, his doctrine was calculated on purpose to gratify men's lusts, and especially to comply with the loose and wanton manners of the East; and, which is above all, had the sword to hew out its way before it; and we know how ready, even without force, in all changes and revolutions of the

* John xx. 21, 22, 23.

† Mark xvi. 15.

* Matt. xxiv. 14.

† Ibid. ver. 3.

world, the conquered have been to follow the religion of the conquerors. Whereas the apostles had no visible advantages, nay, had all the enraged powers of the world to contend against them. And yet, in despite of all, went on in triumph, and quickly made their way into those places where for so many ages no other conquest ever came: "Those parts of Britain," as Tertullian observes, "which were unconquerable and unapproachable by the power of the Roman armies, submitting their necks to the yoke of Christ." A mighty evidence (as he there argues) of Christ's divinity, and that he was the true Messiah. And, indeed, no reasonable account can be given of the strange and successful progress of the Christian religion in those first ages of it, but that it was the birth of heaven, and had a divine and invisible power going along with it to succeed and prosper it. St. Chrysostom discourses this argument at large, some of whose elegant reasonings I shall here transcribe. He tells the Gentile (with whom he was disputing) that he would not prove Christ's Deity by a demonstration from heaven, by his creation of the world, his great and stupendous miracles, his raising the dead, curing the blind, expelling devils, nor from the mighty promises of a future state, and the resurrection of the dead, (which an infidel might easily not only question but deny,) but from what was sufficiently evident and obvious to the meanest idiot,—his planting and propagating Christianity in the world. For it is not, says he, in the power of a mere man, in so short a time to encircle the world, to compass sea and land, and in matters of so great importance, to rescue mankind from the slavery of absurd and unreasonable customs, and the powerful tyranny of evil habits; and these not Romans only, but Persians, and the most barbarous nations of the world. A reformation which he wrought, not by force and the power of the sword, nor by pouring into the world numerous legions and armies; but by a few inconsiderable men, (no more at first than eleven,) a company of obscure and mean, simple and illiterate, poor and helpless, naked and unarmed persons, who had scarce a shoe to tread on, or a coat to cover them. And yet by these he persuaded so great a part of mankind to be able freely to reason, not only of things of the present, but of a future state; to renounce the laws of their country, and throw off those ancient and inveterate customs which had taken root for so many ages, and planted others in their room; and reduced men from those easy ways, whereinto they were hurried, into the more rugged and difficult paths of virtue. All which he did while he had to contend with opposite powers, and when he himself had undergone the most ignominious death, even the death of the cross. Afterwards he addresses himself to the Jew, and discourses with him much after the same rate. Consider, says he, and bethink thyself, what it is in so short a time to fill the whole world with so many famous churches, to convert so many nations to the faith, to prevail with men to forsake the religion of their country, to root up their rites and customs, to shake off the empire of lust and pleasure, and the laws of vice, like dust; to abolish and abominate their temples and their altars, their idols and their sacrifices, their profane and impious festivals, as

dirt and dung; and instead hereof to set up Christian altars in all places, among the Romans, Persians, Scythians, Moors, and Indians: and not there only, but in the countries beyond this world of ours. For even the British islands that lie beyond the ocean, and those that are in it, have felt the power of the Christian faith; churches and altars being erected there to the service of Christ. A matter truly great and admirable, and which would clearly have demonstrated a divine and supereminent power, although there had been no opposition in the case, but that all things had run on calmly and smoothly; to think that in so few years the Christian faith should be able to reclaim the whole world from its vicious customs, and to win them over to other manners, more laborious and difficult, repugnant both to their native inclinations and to the laws and principles of their education, and such as obliged them to a more strict and accurate course of life; and these persons not one or two, not twenty or an hundred, but in a manner all mankind; and this brought about by no other instruments than a few rude and unlearned, private and unknown tradesmen, who had neither estate nor reputation, learning nor eloquence, kindred nor country, to recommend them to the world; a few fishermen and tent-makers, and whom, distinguished by their language, as well as their religion, the rest of the world scorned as barbarous. And yet these were the men by whom our Lord built up his church, and extended it from one end of the world unto the other. Other considerations there are, with which the father does urge and illustrate this argument, which I forbear to insist on in this place.

7. Sixthly; the power and authority conveyed by this commission to the apostles was equally conferred upon all of them. They were all chosen at the same time, all equally empowered to preach and baptize, all equally intrusted with the power of binding and loosing, all invested with the same mission, and equally furnished with the same gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost. Indeed the advocates of the church of Rome do, with a mighty zeal and fierceness, contend for St. Peter's being head and prince of the apostles, advanced by Christ to a supremacy and prerogative not only above, but over the rest of the apostles; and not without reason, the fortunes of that church being concerned in the supremacy of St. Peter. No wonder, therefore, they ransack all corners, press and force in whatever may but seem to give countenance to it. Witness those thin and miserable shifts, which Bellarmine calls arguments, to prove and make it good: so utterly devoid of all rational conviction, so unable to justify themselves to sober and considering men, that a man would think they had been contrived for no other purpose than to cheat fools, and make wise men laugh. And the truth is, nothing with me more shakes the reputation of the wisdom of that learned man, than his making use of such weak and trifling arguments in so important, and concerning an article, so vital and essential to the constitution of that church. As when he argues Peter's superiority from the mere changing of his name, (for what is this to supremacy? besides that it was not done to him alone, the same being done to James and John,) from his being first reckoned up in the catalogue of apostles,

his walking with Christ upon the water, his paying tribute for his master and himself, his being commanded to let down the net, and Christ's teaching in Peter's ship, (and this ship must denote the church, and Peter's being owner of it, entitle him to be supreme ruler and governor of the church; so Bellarmine, in terms as plain as he could well express it,) from Christ's first washing Peter's feet, (though the story recorded by the evangelist says no such thing,) and his foretelling only his death: all which, and many more prerogatives of St. Peter, to the number of no less than twenty-eight, are summoned in to give evidence in this cause; and many of these too drawn out of apocryphal and supposititious authors, and not only uncertain, but absurd and fabulous; and yet upon such arguments as these do they found his paramount authority. A plain evidence of a desperate and sinking cause, when such twigs must be laid hold on to support and keep it above water. Had they suffered Peter to be content with a primacy of order, (which his age and gravity seemed to challenge for him,) no wise and peaceable man would have denied it, as being a thing ordinarily practised among equals, and necessary to the well governing of a society: but when nothing but a primacy of power will serve the turn, as if the rest of the apostles had been inferior to him, this may by no means be granted, as being expressly contrary to the positive determination of our Saviour, when the apostles were contending about this very thing, "Which of them should be accounted the greatest;"* he thus quickly decides the case: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But ye shall not be so: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."† Than which nothing could have been more peremptorily spoken, to rebuke this naughty spirit of pre-eminence. Nor do we ever find St. Peter himself laying claim to any such power, or the apostles giving him the least shadow of it. In the whole course of his affairs there are no intimations of this matter: in his epistle he styles himself but their "fellow presbyter;" and expressly forbids the governors of the church to "lord it over God's heritage." When despatched by the rest of the apostles upon a message to Samaria, he never disputes their authority to do it: when accused by them for going in unto the Gentiles, does he stand upon his prerogative? no, but submissively apologizes for himself: nay, when smartly reproved by St. Paul at Antioch, (when, if ever, his credit lay at stake,) do we find him excepting against it as an affront to his supremacy, and a saucy controlling his superior? Surely quite the contrary: he quietly submitted to the reproof, as one that was sensible how justly he had deserved it. Nor can it be supposed but that St. Paul would have carried it towards him with a greater reverence, had any such peculiar sovereignty been then known to the world. How confidently does St. Paul assert himself to be no whit "inferior to the chiefest apostles," not to Peter himself? "the gospel of the uncircumcision being committed to him, as that of the circumcision was to Peter." Is

Peter often named first among the apostles?—elsewhere others; sometimes James, sometimes Paul and Apollos are placed before him. Did Christ honor him with some singular commendations? An honorable eulogium conveys no supereminent power and sovereignty. Was he dear to Christ? We know another that was the "beloved disciple." So little warrant is there to exalt one above the rest, where Christ made all alike. If from Scripture we descend to the ancient writers of the church, we shall find that though the fathers bestow very great and honorable titles upon Peter, yet they give the same, or what are equivalent, to others of the apostles. Hesychius styles St. James the great, "the brother of our Lord, the commander of the new Jerusalem, the prince of priests, the exarch (or chief) of the apostles, *εν κεφαλαις κορυφην*, the top (or crown) amongst the heads, the great light amongst the lamps, the most illustrious and resplendent amongst the stars: it was Peter that preached, but it was James that made the determination," &c. Of St. Andrew he gives this encomium; that "he was the sacerdotal trumpet, the first-born of the apostolical choir, *πρωτοπαγης της εκκλησιας κυλος*, the prime and firm pillar of the church, Peter before Peter, the foundation of the foundation, the first fruits of the beginning." Peter and John are said to be *ισοτιμοι αλληλοις*, "equally honorable." by St. Cyril, with his whole synod of Alexandria. "St. John," says Chrysostom, "was Christ's beloved, the pillar of all the churches in the world, who had the keys of heaven, drank of the Lord's cup, was washed with his baptism, and with confidence lay in his bosom." And of St. Paul he tells us, that "he was the most excellent of all men, the teacher of the world, the bridegroom of Christ, the planter of the church, the wise master-builder, greater than the apostles;" and much more to the same purpose. Elsewhere he says, that "the care of the whole world was committed to him; that nothing could be more noble or illustrious: yea, that (his miracles considered) he was more excellent than kings themselves." And a little after he calls him "the tongue of the earth, the light of the churches, *τον θεμελιον της πιστεως, τον κυλον κι εδραιωμα της αληθειας*, the foundation of the faith, the pillar and ground of truth." And in a discourse on purpose, wherein he compares Peter and Paul together, he makes them of equal esteem and virtue; "τι Περτρον μειζον; τι δε Παυλον ισον; What greater than Peter! What equal to Paul? a blessed pair! *η πιστευθεισα ολου του κοσμου τας ψυχας*, who had the souls of the whole world committed to their charge." But instances of this nature were endless and infinite. If the fathers at any time style Peter prince of the apostles, they mean no more by it than the best and purest Latin writers mean by *princeps*; the first or chief person of the number, more considerable than the rest, either for his age or zeal. Thus Eusebius tells us, "Peter was *των λοιπων απαντων προηγος*, the prolocutor of all the rest, *αρετης ενκα* for the greatness and generosity of his mind:" that is, in Chrysostom's language, he was "the mouth and chief of the apostles, *ο πανταχου θερμος*, because eager and forward at every turn, and ready to answer those questions which were put to others." In short, as he had no prerogative above the rest, besides his being the chairman and pre-

* Luke xxii. 24, 25, 26. † Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27.

sident of the assembly; so was it granted to him upon no other considerations than those of his age, zeal, and gravity, for which he was more eminent than the rest.

8. We proceed next to inquire into the fitness and qualification of the persons commissioned for this employment; and we shall find them admirably qualified to discharge it, if we consider this following account. First, they immediately received the doctrine of the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself: he intended them for *legati à latere*, his peculiar ambassadors to the world, and therefore furnished them with instructions from his own mouth; and in order hereunto he trained them up for some years under his own discipline and institution; he made them to understand the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, when to others it was not given;"† treated them with the affection of a father, and the freedom and familiarity of a friend. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."* They heard all his sermons, were privy both to his public and private discourses; what he preached abroad he expounded to them at home: he gradually instructed them in the knowledge of divine things, and imparted to them the notions and mysteries of the gospel, not all at once, but as they were able to bear them. By which means they were sufficiently capable of giving a satisfactory account of that doctrine to others, which had been so immediately, so frequently communicated to themselves. Secondly, they were infallibly secure from error in delivering the doctrines and principles of Christianity: for though they were not absolutely privileged from failures and miscarriages in their lives, (these being of more personal and private consideration,) yet were they infallible in their doctrine, this being a matter whereupon the salvation and eternal interests of men did depend. And for this end they had the "spirit of truth"† promised to them, who should "guide them into all truth." Under the conduct of this unerring guide they all steered the same course, and taught and spake the same things, though at different times, and in distant places: and for what was consigned to writing, "all Scripture was given by inspiration of God, and the holy men spake not but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Hence that exact and admirable harmony that is in all their writings and relations, as being all equally dictated by the same spirit of truth. Thirdly, they had been eye-witnesses of all the material passages of our Saviour's life, continually conversant with him from the commencing of his public ministry till his ascension into heaven: they had surveyed all his actions, seen all his miracles, observed the whole method of his conversation, and some of them attended him in his most private solitudes and retirements. And this could not but be a very rational satisfaction to the minds of men, when the publishers of the gospel solemnly declared to the world, that they reported nothing concerning our Saviour but what they had seen with their own eyes, and of the truth whereof

they were as competent judges as the acutest philosopher in the world. Nor could there be any just reason to suspect that they imposed upon men in what they delivered; for besides their naked plainness and simplicity in all other passages of their lives, they cheerfully submitted to the most exquisite hardships, tortures, and sufferings, merely to attest the truth of what they published to the world. Next to the evidence of our own senses, no testimony is more valid and forcible than his who relates what himself has seen. Upon this account our Lord told his apostles, "that they should be witnesses to him both in Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."* And so necessary a qualification of an apostle was this thought to be, that it was almost the only condition propounded in the choice of a new apostle, after the fall of Judas: "Wherefore," says Peter, "of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."† Accordingly we find the apostles constantly making use of this argument as the most rational evidence to convince those whom they had to deal with. "We are witnesses of all things which Jesus did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; and he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he that is ordained of God to be judge of the quick and dead."‡ Thus St. John after the same way of arguing, appeals to sensible demonstration: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life: (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us:) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also might have fellowship with us."|| This, to name no more, St. Peter thought a sufficient vindication of the apostolical doctrine from the suspicion of forgery and imposture: "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty."¶ God had frequently given testimony to the divinity of our blessed Saviour, by visible manifestations and appearances from heaven, and particularly by an audible voice: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now "this voice which came from heaven," says he, "we heard when we were with him in the holy mount."

9. Fourthly; the apostles were invested with a power of working miracles, as the readiest means to procure their religion a firm belief and entertainment in the minds of men. For the miracles are the great confirmation of the truth of any doctrine, and the most rational evidence of a divine

* John xv. 15.

† Ibid. xvi. 13.

* Acts i. 8. † Acts i. 21, 22. ‡ Acts x. 39, 40, &c.

|| 1 John i. 1, 2, 3.

§ Peter i. 16, 17.

commission. For seeing God only can create, and control the laws of nature, produce something out of nothing, and call things that are not as if they were, give eyes to them that were born blind, raise the dead, &c. things plainly beyond all possible powers of nature, no man that believes the wisdom and goodness of an infinite being, can suppose that this God of truth should affix his seal to a lie, or communicate this power to any that would abuse it, to confirm and countenance delusions and impostures. Nicodemus's reasoning was very plain and convictive, when he concludes that Christ "must needs be a teacher come from God, for that no man could do those miracles that he did, except God were with him"* The force of which argument lies here, that nothing but a divine power can work miracles, and that Almighty God cannot be supposed miraculously to assist any but those, whom he himself sends upon his own errand. The stupid and barbarous Lycaonians, when they beheld the man who had been a cripple from his mother's womb cured by St. Paul in an instant, only with the speaking of a word, saw that there was something in it more than human, and therefore concluded that "the Gods were come down to them in the likeness of men."† Upon this account St. Paul‡ reckons miracles among the *τα σημεια του αποστολου*, the signs and evidences of an apostle; whom therefore Chrysostom brings in elegantly pleading for himself, that though he could not show, as the signs of his priesthood and ministry, long robes and gaudy vestments, with bells sounding at their borders, as the Aaronical priests did of old; though he had no golden crowns or holy mitres, yet could he produce what was infinitely more venerable and regardable than all these—unquestionable signs and miracles: he came not with altars and oblations, with a number of strange and symbolical rites; but what was greater, raised the dead, cast out devils, cured the blind, healed the lame, making the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through many signs and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God. These were the things that clearly showed that their mission and ministry was not from men, nor taken up of their own heads, but that they acted herein by a divine warrant and authority. That therefore it might plainly appear to the world that they did not falsify in what they said, or deliver any more than God had given them in commission, he enabled them to do strange and miraculous operations, "bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost."|| This was a power put into the first draught of their commission, when confined only to the cities of Israel: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."§ But more fully confirmed unto them when our Lord went to heaven; then he told them that "these signs should follow them that believe; that in his name they should cast out devils, and speak with new tongues; that they should take up serpents, and if they drank

any deadly thing, it should not hurt them; that they should lay hands on the sick, and they should recover."* And the event was accordingly, "for they went forth and preached every where, the Lord worketh with them, and confirming the word with signs following." When Paul and Barnabas came up to the council at Jerusalem, this was one of the first things they gave an account of, "all the multitude keeping silence while they declared what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."† Thus the very "shadow of Peter as he passed by cured the sick:"‡ thus "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."§ So that, besides the innate characters of divinity which the Christian religion brought along with it, containing nothing but what was highly reasonable, and very becoming God to reveal, it had the highest external evidence that any religion was capable of—the attestation of great and unquestionable miracles, done not once or twice, not privately and in corners, not before a few simple and credulous persons, but frequently and at every turn, publicly and in places of the most solemn concourse, before the wisest and most judicious inquirers; and this power of miracles continued not only during the apostles' time, but for some ages after.

10. But because, besides miracles in general, the Scripture takes particular notice of many gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost conferred upon the apostles and first preachers of the gospel, it may not be amiss to consider some of the chiefest and most material of them, as we find them enumerated by the apostle;|| only premising this observation, that though these gifts were distinctly distributed to persons of an inferior order, so that one had this, and another that, yet were they (probably) all conferred upon the apostles, and doubtless in larger proportions than upon the rest. First, we take notice of the gift of prophecy, a clear evidence of divine inspiration, and an extraordinary mission: "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."¶ It had been for many ages the signal and honorable privilege of the Jewish church; and that the Christian economy might challenge as sacred regards from men, and that it might appear that God had not withdrawn his Spirit from his church in this new state of things, it was revived under the dispensation of the gospel, according to that famous prophecy of Joel, exactly accomplished (as Peter told the Jews) upon the day of pentecost, when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were so plentifully shed upon the apostles and primitive Christians: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: It shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy."‡ It lay in general in

* John iii. 2.

† Acts xiv. 10, 11.

‡ 2 Cor. xii. 12.

§ Heb. ii. 4.

§ Matt. x. 7, 8.

* Mark xvi. 17—20.

† Acts xv. 12.

‡ Acts xix. 11, 12.

|| 1 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

§ Rev. xix. 10. ¶ Joel ii. 28, 29; Acts ii. 16, 17, 18.

revealing and making known to others the mind of God ; but discovered itself in particular instances, partly in foretelling things to come, and what should certainly happen in after times : a thing set beyond the reach of any finite understanding ; for though such effects as depend upon natural agents, or moral and political causes, may be foreseen by studious and considering persons ; yet the knowledge of futurities, things purely contingent, that merely depend upon men's choice, and their mutable and uncertain wills, can only fall under his view who at once behold things past, present, and to come. Now this was conferred upon the apostles and some of the first Christians, as appears from many instances in the history of the apostolic acts ; and we find the apostles' writings frequently interspersed with prophetic predictions concerning the great apostacy from the faith, the universal corruption and degeneracy of manners, the rise of particular heresies, the coming of antichrist, and several other things, which the Spirit said expressly should come to pass in the latter times : besides, that St. John's whole book of Revelation is almost entirely made up of prophecies concerning the future state and condition of the church. Sometimes by his spirit of prophecy God declared things that were of present concernment to the exigencies of the church, as when he signified to them that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas for the conversion of the Gentiles, and many times immediately designed particular persons to be pastors and governors of the church. Thus we read of "the gift" that was given to Timothy "by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery ;" that is, his ordination, to which he was particularly pointed out by some prophetic designation. But the main use of this prophetic gift in those times was, to explain some of the more difficult and particular parts of the Christian doctrine, especially to expound and apply the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah and his kingdom, in their public assemblies ; whence the "gift of prophecy"* is explained "by understanding all mysteries and all knowledge ;" that is, the most dark and difficult places of Scripture, the types and figures, the ceremonies and prophecies of the Old Testament. And thus we are commonly to understand those words, "prophets" and "prophesying," that so familiarly occur in the New Testament. "Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith ;"† that is, expound Scripture according to the generally received principles of faith and life. So the apostle elsewhere, prescribing rules for the decent and orderly managing of divine worship in their public assemblies : "Let the prophets," says he "speak two or three," that is, at the same assembly, "and let the other judge ;" and if, while any is thus expounding, another has a divine afflatus, whereby he is more particularly enabled to explain some difficult and emergent passage, "let the first hold his peace ; for ye may all" that have this gift, "prophesy one by one ;" that so, thus orderly proceeding, "all may learn, and all may be comforted."‡ Nor can the first

pretend, that this interruption is an unseasonable check to his revelation, seeing he may command himself ; for though among the Gentiles the prophetic and ecstatic impulse did so violently press upon the inspired person that he could not govern himself, yet in the church of God "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," may be so ruled and restrained by them as to make way for others. This order of Christian prophets, considered as a distinct ministry by itself, is constantly placed next to the apostolical office, and is frequently, by St. Paul, preferred before any other spiritual gifts then bestowed upon the church.—When this spirit of prophecy ceased in the Christian church we cannot certainly find. It continued some competent time beyond the apostolic age. Justin Martyr, expressly tells Trypho, the Jew, "the gifts of prophecy are even yet extant among us :"¹ an argument, as he there tells him, that those things which had of old been the great privileges of their church, were now translated into the Christian church. And Eusebius, speaking of a revelation made to one Alcibiades, who lived about the time of Irenæus, adds, that the divine grace had not withdrawn its presence from the church, but that they still had the Holy Ghost as their counsellor to direct them.

11. Secondly, they had "the gift of discerning spirits," whereby they were enabled to discover the truth or falsehood of men's pretences, whether their gifts were real or counterfeit, and their persons truly inspired or not. For many men, actuated only by diabolical impulses, might entitle themselves to divine inspirations, and others might be imposed upon by their illusions, and mistake their dreams and fancies for the Spirit's dictates and revelations : or might so subtly and artificially counterfeit revelations, that they might with most pass for current, especially in those times when these supernatural gifts were so common and ordinary ; and our Lord himself had frequently told them that false prophets would arise, and that many would confidently plead for themselves before him, that they had "prophesied in his name." That therefore the church might not be imposed on, God was pleased to endue the apostles, and it may be some others, with an immediate faculty of discerning the chaff from the wheat, true from false prophets ; nay, to know when the true prophets delivered the revelations of the Spirit, and when they expressed only their own conceptions. This was a mighty privilege, but yet seems to me to have extended further, to judge of the sincerity or hypocrisy of men's hearts in the profession of religion ; that so bad men being discovered, suitable censures and punishments might be passed upon them, and others cautioned to avoid them. Thus Peter, at first sight, discovered Ananias and Sapphira, and the rotten hypocrisy of their intentions, before there was any external evidence in the case ; and told Simon Magus, though baptized before, upon his embracing Christianity, "that his heart was not right in the sight of God ; for I perceive," says he, "that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."* Thirdly ; the apostles had the gift of tongues, furnished with variety of utterance, able to speak on a sud-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

† Rom. xii. 6.

‡ 1 Cor. xiv. 29—31.

* Acts viii. 21—23.

den several languages which they had never learnt, as occasion was administered, and the exigencies of persons and nations, with whom they conversed, did require. For the apostles being principally designed to convert the world, and to plant Christianity in all countries and nations, it was absolutely necessary that they should be able readily to express their minds in the languages of those countries to which they addressed themselves; seeing otherwise it would have been a work of time and difficulty, and not consistent with the term of the apostles' lives, had they been first to learn the different languages of those nations before they could have preached the gospel to them. Hence this gift was diffused upon the apostles in larger measure and proportion than upon other men: "I speak with tongues more than ye all,"* says St. Paul; that is, than all the gifted persons in the church of Corinth. Our Lord had told the apostles, before his departure from them, "that they should be endued with power from on high;" which, upon the day of Pentecost, was particularly made good in this instance; when in a moment they were enabled to speak almost all the languages of the then known world, and this as a specimen and first-fruits of the rest of those miraculous powers that were conferred upon them.

12. A fourth gift was that of interpretation, or unfolding to others what had been delivered in an unknown tongue. For the Christian assemblies in those days were frequently made up of men of different nations, and who could not understand what the apostles, or others, had spoken to the congregation; this God supplied by this gift of interpretation, enabling some to interpret what others did not understand, and to speak it to them in their own native language. St. Paul† largely discourses the necessity of this gift, in order to the instructing and edifying of the church, seeing without it their meetings could be no better than the assembly of Babel after the confusion of languages, where one man must needs be a barbarian to another; and all the praying and preaching of the minister of the assembly be to many altogether fruitless and unprofitable, and no better than a speaking into the air. What is the speaking, though with the tongue of angels, to them that do not understand it? How can the idiot and unlearned say amen, who understand not the language of him that giveth thanks? The duty may be done with admirable quaintness and accuracy; but what is he the better, from whom it is locked up in an unknown tongue? A consideration that made the apostle solemnly profess, that "he had rather speak five words in the church with his understanding, than by his voice he might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."‡ Therefore "if any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be but by two, or at most by three, and let one interpret" what the rest have spoken; "but if there be no interpreter," none present able to do this, "let him keep silence in the church, and speak to himself and to God."|| A man that impartially reads this discourse of the apostle, may wonder how the church

of Rome, in defiance of it, can so openly practise, so confidently defend their Bible and divine services in an unknown tongue; so flatly repugnant to the dictates of common reason, the usage of the first Christian church, and these plain apostolical commands. But this is not the only instance wherein that church has departed both from Scripture, reason, and the practice of the first and purest ages of Christianity. Indeed there is some cause why they are so zealous to keep both Scripture and their divine worship in a strange language; lest by reading the one the people should become wise enough to discover the gross errors and corruptions of the other. Fifthly; the apostles had the gift of healing, of curing diseases without the arts of physic; the most inveterate distempers being equally removable by an almighty power, and vanishing at their speaking of a word. This begot an extraordinary veneration for them and their religion among the common sort of men, who, as they are strongest moved with sensible effects, so are most taken with those miracles that are beneficial to the life of man. Hence the infinite cures done in every place; God mercifully providing that the body should partake with the soul in the advantages of the gospel, the cure of the one ushering in, many times, the conversion of the other. This gift was very common in those early days, bestowed not upon the apostles only, but upon the ordinary governors of the church, who were wont "to lay their hands upon the sick," and sometimes "to anoint them with oil," (a symbolic rite in use among the Jews, to denote the grace of God,) and "to pray over," and for "them in the name of the Lord Jesus;"* whereby, upon a hearty confession and forsaking of their sins, both health and pardon were at once bestowed upon them. How long this gift, with its appendant ceremony of unction, lasted in the church is not easy to determine: that it was in use in Tertullian's time, we learn from the instance he gives us of Proculus, a Christian, who cured the emperor Severus, by anointing him with oil; for which the emperor had him in great honor, and kept him with him at court all his life; it afterwards vanishing by degrees, as all other miraculous powers, as Christianity gained firm footing in the world. As for extreme unction, so generally maintained and practised in the church of Rome, and by them made a sacrament, I doubt it will receive very little countenance from this primitive usage. Indeed, could they as easily restore sick men to health as they can anoint them with oil, I think nobody would contradict them; but till they can pretend to the one I think it unreasonable they should use the other. The best is, though founding it upon this apostolical practice, they have turned it to a quite contrary purpose; instead of recovering men to life and health, to dispose and fit them for dying when all hopes of life are taken from them.

13. Sixthly; the apostles were invested with a power of immediately inflicting corporal punishments upon great and notorious sinners; and this, probably, is that which he means by his "operations of powers," or "working miracles;"‡ which surely cannot be meant of miracles in general,

* 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

† 1 Cor. xiv.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 8.

|| Ibid. ver. 27, 28.

* James, v. 14, 15 16.

† 1 Cor. xii. 10.

being reckoned up amongst the particular gifts of the Holy Ghost; nor is there any other to which it can with equal probability refer. A power to inflict diseases upon the body, as when St. Paul struck Elymas, the sorcerer, with blindness; and sometimes extending to the loss of life itself, as in the sad instance of Ananias and Sapphira. This was the *virga apostolica*, the rod (mentioned by St. Paul) which the apostles held and shook over scandalous and insolent offenders, and sometimes laid upon them: "What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and the spirit of meekness?"* Where observe, says Chrysostom, how the apostle tempers his discourse: the love and meekness, and his desire to know, argued care and kindness; but the rod spake dread and terror; a rod of severity and punishment, and which sometimes mortally chastised the offender. Elsewhere, he frequently gives intimations of this power, when he was to deal with stubborn and incorrigible persons: "Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled; for though I should boast somewhat more of our authority (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction) I should not be ashamed; that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters."† And he again puts them in mind of it at the close of his epistle: "I told you before, and foretel you, as if I were present, the second time, and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all others, that if I come again I will not spare."‡ But he hoped these smart warnings would supersede all further severity against them: "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction."§ Of this nature was the "delivering over persons unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh," the chastising the body by some present pain or sickness, "that the spirit might be saved,"¶ by being brought to a seasonable repentance. Thus he dealt with Hymenæus and Alexander, who had "made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;" he delivered them unto Satan, "that they might learn not to blaspheme."‡ Nothing being more usual in those times, than for persons excommunicate, and cut off from the body of the church, to be presently arrested by Satan, as the common-sergeant and executioner, and by him either actually possessed, or tormented in their bodies by some diseases which he brought upon them. And indeed this severe discipline was no more than necessary in those times, when Christianity was wholly destitute of any civil or coercive power, to beget and keep up a due reverence and regard to the sentences and determinations of the church, and to secure the laws of religion and the holy censures from being slighted by every bold and contumacious offender. And this effect we find it had after the dreadful instance of Ananias and Sapphira; "Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these

things." To what has been said concerning these apostolical gifts, let me further observe, that they had not only these gifts residing in themselves, but a power to bestow them upon others; so that by imposition of hands, or upon hearing and embracing the apostles' doctrine, and being baptized into the Christian faith, they could confer these miraculous powers upon persons thus qualified to receive them, whereby they were in a moment enabled to speak divers languages, to prophesy, to interpret, and do other miracles, to the admiration and astonishment of all that heard and saw them. A privilege peculiar to the apostles; for we do not find that any inferior order of gifted persons were intrusted with it. And therefore, as Chrysostom well observes, though Philip, the deacon, wrought great miracles at Samaria, to the conversion of many; yea, to the conviction of Simon Magus himself, "yet the Holy Ghost fell upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus;" till Peter and John came down to them, who having "prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Which when the magician beheld, he offered the apostles money to enable him, that on whomsoever he laid his hands, he might derive these miraculous powers upon them.

14. Having seen how fitly furnished the apostles were for the execution of their office, let us in the last place inquire into its duration and continuance. And here it must be considered, that in the apostolical office there was something extraordinary, and something ordinary. What was extraordinary was their immediate commission derived from the mouth of Christ himself; their unlimited charge to preach the gospel up and down the world, without being tied to any particular places; the supernatural and miraculous powers conferred upon them as apostles; their infallible guidance in delivering the doctrines of the gospel; and these all expired and determined with their persons. The standing and perpetual part of it, was to teach and instruct the people in the duties and principles of religion, to administer the sacraments, to constitute guides and officers, and to exercise the discipline and government of the church; and in these they are succeeded by the ordinary rulers and ecclesiastic guides, who were to superintend and discharge the affairs and offices of the church to the end of the world. Whence it is that bishops and governors came to be styled apostles, as being their successors in ordinary; for so they frequently are in the writings of the church. Thus Timothy, who was bishop of Ephesus, is called an apostle; Clemens of Rome, Clemens the apostle; St. Mark, bishop of Alexandria, by Eusebius, styled both an apostle and evangelist; Ignatius, a bishop and apostle. A title that continued in after ages, especially given to those that were the first planters or restorers of Christianity in any country. In the Coptic calendar, published by Mr. Selden, the seventh day of the month Baschnes, answering to our second of May, is dedicated to the memory of St. Athanasius the apostle. Acacius and Paulus, in their letter to Epiphanius, style him "a new apostle and preacher;" and Sidonius Apollinaris writing to Lupus, bishop of Troyes, in

* 1 Cor. iv. 21. † 2 Cor. x. 6, 8, 9.

‡ 2 Cor. xiii. 2. § Ibid. ver. 10.

§ 1 Cor. v. 5, vid. Chrysost. et Hieron. in loc.

¶ 1 Tim. i. 20.

France, speaks of "the honor due to his eminent apostleship." An observation which it were easy enough to confirm by abundant instances, were it either doubtful in itself or necessary to my purpose; but being neither, I forbear.

ST. PETER.

SECTION I.

Of St. Peter, from his Birth till his first coming to Christ.

THE land of Palestine was, at and before the coming of our blessed Saviour, distinguished into three several provinces, Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee. This last was divided into the upper and lower. In the upper, called also Galilee of the Gentiles, within the division anciently belonging to the tribe of Naphthali, stood Bethsaida, formerly an obscure and inconsiderable village, till lately re-edified and enlarged by Philip the tetrarch,* by him advanced to the place and title of a city, replenished with inhabitants, and fortified with power and strength; and in honor of Julia, the daughter of Augustus Cæsar, by him styled Julius. Situate it was upon the banks of the sea of Galilee, and had a wilderness on the other side, thence called the desert of Bethsaida, whither our Saviour used often to retire; the privacies and solitudes of the place advantageously ministering to the divine contemplation. But Bethsaida was not so remarkable for this adjoining wilderness as itself was memorable for a worse sort of barrenness—ingratitude, and unprofitableness under the influences of Christ's sermons and miracles; thence severely upbraided by him, and threatened with one of his deepest woes: "Wo unto thee Corazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida," &c.† A wo that it seems stuck close to it; for whatever it was at this time, one who surveyed it in the last age tells us, that it was shrunk again into a very mean and small village, consisting only of a few cottages of Moors and wild Arabs; and later travellers have since assured us, that even these are dwindled away into one poor cottage at this day. So fatally does sin undermine the greatest, the goodliest places; so certainly does God's word take place, and not one iota either of his promises or threatenings falls to the ground. Next to the honor that was done it by our Saviour's presence, who living most in these parts frequently resorted hither, it had nothing greater to recommend it to the notice of posterity, than that (besides some other of the apostles) it was the birth-place of St. Peter; a person how inconsiderable soever in his private fortunes, yet of great note and eminency as one of the prime ambassadors of the Son of God, to whom both sacred and ecclesiastical stories give, though not a superiority, a precedence in the college of apostles.

2. The particular time of his birth cannot be recovered, no probable footsteps or intimations being left of it: in the general we may conclude him at least ten years older than his Master; his married condition and settled course of life at his first coming to Christ, and that authority and respect which the gravity of his person procured him amongst the rest of the apostles, can speak him no less; but for any thing more particular and positive in this matter I see no reason to affirm. Indeed, might we trust the account, which one (who pretends to calculate his nativity with ostentation enough) has given of it, we are told that he was born three years before the blessed virgin, and just seventeen before the incarnation of our Saviour. But let us view his account.

	Nat.	AN.	AN.	AN.
	{ ab orbe cond.	4034	{ Octav. August.	8
	{ a diluvio	2379	{ a lo ejus consul	24
est	{ U. C.	734	{ ante b. virg.	3
			{ ante Chr. nat	17

When I met with such a pompous train of epochs, the least I expected was truth and certainty. This computation he grounds upon the date of St. Peter's death, placed (as elsewhere he tells us) by Bellarmine in the eighty-sixth year of his age; so that recounting from the year of Christ sixty-nine, when Peter is commonly said to have suffered, he runs up his age to his birth, and spreads it out into so many several dates. But alas, all is built upon a sandy bottom. For besides his mistake about the year of the world, few of his dates hold due correspondence. But the worst of it is, that after all this, Bellarmine (upon whose single testimony all this fine fabric is erected) says no such thing, but only supposes, merely for argument's sake, that St. Peter might very well be eighty-six (it is erroneously printed seventy-six) years old at the time of his martyrdom.—So far will confidence, or ignorance, or both, carry men aside; if it could be a mistake, and not rather a bold imposing upon the world. But of this enough, and perhaps more than it deserves.

3. Being circumcised according to the rites of the Mosaic law, the name given him at his circumcision was Simon, or Symeon; a name common amongst the Jews, especially in their later times. This was afterwards by our Saviour not abolished, but added with the title of Cephas, which in Syriac (the vulgar language of the Jews at that time) signifying a stone, or rock, was thence derived into the Greek, Πέτρος and by us, Peter: so far was Hesychius out, when rendering Πέτρος by ὁ ἐκκληστής, an expounder or interpreter; deriving it from the Hebrew word which signifies to explain and interpret. By this new imposition our Lord seemed to denote the firmness and constancy of his faith, and his vigorous activity in building up the church, as a spiritual house upon the true rock, the living and corner-stone, chosen of God, and precious, as St. Peter himself expresses it.* Nor can our Saviour be understood to have hereby conferred upon him any peculiar supremacy or sovereignty above, much less over the rest of the apostles; for in respect of the great trust committed to them, and their being sent to plant Christianity in the world, they are all equally styled foundations.† Nor is it accountable either to

* Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. c. 3, p. 618; Matt. xi. 21.

† Matt. xi. 21.

* 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6.

† Rev. xxi. 14.

Scripture or reason to suppose that by this name our Lord should design the person of Peter to be that very rock upon which his church was to be built. In a fond imitation of this new name given to St. Peter, those who pretend to be his successors in the see of Rome, usually lay by their own, and assume a new name upon their advancement to the apostolic chair; it being one of the first questions which the cardinals put to the new elected pope, "by what name he will please to be called." This custom first began about the year 844, when Peter di Bocca-porco (or Swine's-mouth) being chosen pope, changed his name into Sergius the second; probably not so much to avoid the uncomeliness of his own name, as if unbecfitting the dignity of his place, (for this being but his paternal name, would after have been no part of his pontifical style and title,) as out of a mighty reverence to St. Peter, accounting himself not worthy to bear his name, though it was his own baptismal name. Certain it is, that none of the bishops of that see ever assumed St. Peter's name; and some who have had it as their Christian name before, have laid it aside upon their election to the papacy. But to return to our apostle.

4. His father was Jonah, probably a fisherman of Bethsaida, for the sacred story takes no farther notice of him than by the bare mention of his name; and I believe there had been no great danger of mistake, though Metaphrastes had not told us that it was not Jonas the prophet, who came out of the belly of the whale. Brother he was to St. Andrew the apostle, and some question there is amongst the ancients, which was the elder brother. Epiphanius (probably from some tradition current in his time) clearly adjudges it to St. Andrew, herein universally followed by those of the church of Rome, that the precedence given to St. Peter may not seem to be put upon the account of his seniority. But to him we may oppose the authority of St. Chrysostom, a person equal both in time and credit, who expressly says, that though Andrew came later into life than Peter, yet he first brought him to the knowledge of the gospel; which Baronius, against all pretence of reason, would understand of his entering into eternal life. Besides, St. Jerome, Cassian, Bede, and others, are for St. Peter being the elder brother; expressly ascribing it to his age, that he, rather than any other, was president of the college of apostles. However it was, it sounds not a little to the honor of their father, (as of Zebedee also in the like case,) that of but twelve apostles two of his sons were taken into the number. In his youth he was brought up to fishing, which we may guess to have been the staple trade of Bethsaida, (which hence probably borrowed its name, signifying an house, or habitation of fishing, though others render it by hunting, the Hebrew word signifying either,) much advantaged herein by the neighborhood of the lake of Genesareth, (on whose banks it stood,) called also the sea of Galilee, and the sea of Tiberias, according to the mode of the Hebrew language, wherein all greater confluences of waters are called seas. Of this lake the Hebrews have a saying, that "of all the seven seas which God created, he made choice of none but the sea of Genesareth;" which, however

intended by them, is true only in this respect, that our blessed Saviour made choice of it, to honor it with the frequency of his presence, and the power of his miraculous operations. In length it was an hundred furlongs, and about forty over; the water of it pure and clear, sweet and most fit to drink; stored it was with several sorts of fish, and those different both in kind and taste from those in other places. Here it was that Peter closely followed the exercise of his calling; from whence it seems he afterwards removed to Capernaum, (probably upon his marriage, at least frequently resided there,) for there we meet with his house, and there we find him paying tribute; a house, over which, Nicephorus tells us, that Helen, the mother of Constantine, erected a beautiful church to the honor of St. Peter. This place was equally advantageous for the managery of his trade,—standing upon the influx of Jordan into the sea of Galilee, and where he might as well reap the fruits of an honest and industrious diligence. A mean, I confess it was, and a more servile course of life, as which, besides the great pains and labor it required, exposed him to all the injuries of wind and weather, to the storms of the sea, the darkness and tempestuousness of the night, and all to make a very small return. An employment whose restless troubles, constant hardships, frequent dangers, and amazing horrors, have been described by many authors.* But meanness is no bar in God's way; the poor, if virtuous, are as dear to heaven as the wealthy and honorable; equally alike to him with whom "there is no respect of persons."

Nay, our Lord seemed to cast a peculiar honor upon this profession, when afterwards calling him and some others of the same trade from catching of fish, to be (as he told them) "fishers of men."

5. And here we may justly reflect upon the wise and admirable methods of the Divine Providence, which in planting and propagating the Christian religion in the world, made choice of such mean and unlikely instruments; that he should hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, men that had not been educated in the academy and the schools of learning, but brought up to a trade, to catch fish and mend nets; most of the apostles being taken from the meanest trades, and all of them (St. Paul excepted) unfurnished of all arts of learning, and the advantages of liberal and ingenuous education; and yet these were the men that were designed to run down the world, and to overturn the learning of the prudent. Certainly, had human wisdom been to manage the business, it would have taken quite other measures, and chosen out the profoundest rabbins, the acutest philosophers, the smoothest orators, such as would have been most likely, by strength of reason and arts of rhetoric, to have triumphed over the minds of men, to grapple with the stubbornness of the Jews, and baffle the finer notions and speculations of the Greeks. We find that those sects of philosophy that gained most credit in the heathen

* See particularly Oppian, *Ἀλιευτ. Βιβλ. α.* non longe ab init. The Emperor Antoninus gave a piece of gold for every verse in the description here referred to.—ED.

world, did it this way, by their eminency in some arts and sciences, whereby they recommended themselves to the acceptance of the wiser and more ingenious part of mankind. Julian the apostate thinks it a reasonable exception against the Jewish prophets, that they were incompetent messengers and interpreters of the divine will, because they had not their minds cleared and purged, by passing through the circle of polite arts and learning. Why, now this is the wonder of it, that the first preachers of the gospel should be such rude, unlearned men, and yet so suddenly, so powerfully prevail over the learned world, and conquer so many who had the greatest parts and abilities, and the strongest prejudices against it, by the simplicity of the gospel. When Celsus objected, that the apostles were but a company of mean and illiterate persons, sorry mariners and fishermen, Origen quickly returns upon him with this answer: "That hence it was plainly evident, that they taught Christianity by a divine power, when such persons were able with such an uncontrolled success to subdue men to the obedience of his word; for that they had no eloquent tongues, no subtle and discursive head, none of the refined and rhetorical arts of Greece, to conquer the minds of men. For my part," says he, in another place,—“I verily believe that the holy Jesus purposely made use of such preachers of his doctrine, that there might be no suspicion that they came instructed with arts of sophistry, but that it might be clearly manifest to all the world that there was no crafty design in it, and that they had a divine power going along with them, which was more efficacious than the greatest volubility of expression, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions. Had it not been for this divine power that upheld it,” as he elsewhere argues,—“the Christian religion must needs have sunk under those weighty pressures that lay upon it, having not only to contend with the potent opposition of the senate, emperors, people, and the whole power of the Roman empire, but to conflict with those home-bred wants and necessities wherewith its own professors were oppressed and burthened.”

6. It could not but greatly vindicate the apostles from all suspicion of forgery and imposture, in the thoughts of sober and unbiassed persons, to see their doctrine readily entertained by men of the most discerning and inquisitive minds. Had they dealt only with the rude and the simple, the idiot and the unlearned, there might have been some pretence to suspect that they lay in wait to deceive, and designed to impose upon the world by crafty and insinuating arts and methods. But, alas, they had other persons to deal with, men of the acutest wits and most profound abilities, the wisest philosophers and most subtle disputants, able to weigh an argument with the greatest accuracy, and to decline the force of the strongest reasonings; and who had their parts edged with the keenest prejudices of education, and a mighty veneration for the religion of their country; a religion that for so many ages had governed the world, and taken firm possession of the minds of men. And yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, these plain men conquered the wise and the learned, and brought them over to that doctrine that

was despised and scorned, opposed and persecuted, and that had nothing but its own native excellency to recommend it. A clear evidence that there was something in it beyond the craft and power of men. “Is not this,” says an elegant apologist, making his address to the heathens, “enough to make you believe and entertain it, to consider that in so short a time it has diffused itself over the whole world, civilized the most barbarous nations, softened the roughest and most intractable tempers; that the greatest wits and scholars, orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers have quitted their formerly dear and beloved sentiments, and heartily embraced the precepts and doctrines of the gospel?” Upon this account, Theodoret* does with no less truth than elegance, insult and triumph over the heathens. He tells them, that whoever would be at the pains to compare the best law makers, either amongst the Greeks or Romans, with our fishermen and publicans, would soon perceive what a divine virtue and efficacy there was in them above all others, whereby they did not only conquer their neighbors, not only the Greeks and Romans, but brought over the most barbarous nations to a compliance with the law of the gospel; and that not by force of arms, not by numerous bands of soldiers, not by methods of torture and cruelty, but by meek persuasives, and a convincing the world of the excellency and usefulness of those laws which they propounded to them. A thing which the wisest and best men of the heathen world could never do, to make their *dogmata* and institutions universally obtain; nay, that Plato himself could never, by all his plausible and insinuating arts, make his laws to be entertained by his own dear Athenians. He further shows them, that the laws published by our fishermen and tent-makers, could never be abolished (like those made by the best amongst them) by the policies of Cæsar, the power of Claudius, the cruelties of Nero, or any of the succeeding emperors; but still they went on conquering and to conquer, and made millions both of men and women willing to embrace flames, and to encounter death in its most horrid shapes, rather than disown and forsake them; whereof he calls to witness those many churches and monuments every where erected to the memory of Christian martyrs, no less to the honor than advantage of those cities and countries, and in some sense to all mankind.

7. The sum of the discourse is, in the apostle's words, that “God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak to confound those that are mighty, the base things of the world, things most vilified and despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are,”† These were the things, these the persons whom God sent upon this errand, to silence “the wise,

* Theodoret, who was one of the earliest and most learned historians of the church, lived in the former part of the fifth century. His commentaries on various parts of Scripture display great knowledge and piety; but he suffered much from the factious spirit of his age: and in the disputes respecting Nestorius, was threatened with the loss of the episcopal rank, to which he had been justly elevated for his virtues.

—Ed.

† 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

the scribe, and the disputer of this world, and to make foolish the wisdom of this world." For though "the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom, though the preaching a crucified Saviour was a scandal to the Jews, and foolishness to the" learned "Grecians;" yet, "by this foolishness of preaching, God was pleased to save them that believed;" and in the event made it appear, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men."* That so the honor of all might entirely redound to himself; so the apostle concludes, "that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, should glory in the Lord."

SECTION II.

Of St. Peter, from his first coming to Christ till his being called to be a Disciple.

THOUGH we find not whether Peter, before his coming to Christ, was engaged in any of the particular sects at this time in the Jewish church, yet is it greatly probable that he was one of the disciples to John the Baptist. For first, it is certain that his brother Andrew was so; and we can hardly think these two brothers should draw contrary ways, or that he who was so ready to bring his brother the early tidings of the Messiah, that the "sun of righteousness" was already risen in those parts, should not be as solicitous to bring him under the discipline and influences of John the Baptist, the "day-star" that went before him. Secondly; Peter's forwardness and curiosity at the first news of Christ's appearing, to come to him and converse with him, show that his expectations had been awakened, and some light in this matter conveyed to him by the preaching and ministry of John, who was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight;" showing them who it was that was coming after him.

2. His first acquaintance with Christ commenced in this manner. The blessed Jesus having for thirty years passed through the solitudes of a private life, had lately been baptized in Jordan, and there publicly owned to be the Son of God, by the most solemn attestations that heaven could give him; whereupon he was immediately hurried into the wilderness, to a personal contest with the devil for forty days together. So natural is it to the enemy of mankind to malign our happiness, and to seek to blast our joys, when we are under the highest instances of the divine grace and favor. His enemy being conquered in three set battles, and fled, he returned hence, and came down to Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing his proselytes, and endeavoring to satisfy the Jews, who had sent to him curiously to inquire concerning this new Messiah that appeared among them. Upon the great testimony which the Baptist gave him, and his pointing to our Lord then passing by him, two of John's disciples,† who were then with him, presently followed after Christ, one of which was Andrew, Simon's brother.

It was towards evening when they came, and therefore probably they staid with him all night, during which Andrew had opportunity to inform himself, and to satisfy his most scrupulous inquiries. Early the next morning, (if not that very evening,) he hastened to acquaint his brother Simon with these glad tidings. It is not enough to be good and happy alone; religion is a communicative principle, that, like the circles in the water, delights to multiply itself, and to diffuse its influences round about it, and especially upon those whom nature had placed nearest to us. He tells him, they had found the long-looked for Messiah, him whom Moses and the prophets had so signally foretold, and whom all the devout and pious of that nation had so long expected.

3. Simon, (one of those who "looked for the kingdom of God, and waited for the redemption of Israel,") ravished with his joyful news, and impatient of delay, presently follows his brother to the place; whither he was no sooner come but our Lord, to give him an evidence of his Divinity, salutes him at first sight by name, tells him what and who he was, both as to his name and kindred, what title should be given him, that he should be called Cephas, or Peter; a name which he afterwards actually conferred upon him.* What passed further between them, and whether these two brothers henceforward personally attended our Saviour's motions in the number of his disciples, the sacred story leaves us in the dark. It seems probable that they had staid with him for some time, till they were instructed in the first rudiments of his doctrine, and by his leave departed home. For it is reasonable to suppose, that our Lord being unwilling, at this time especially, to awaken the jealousies of the state by a numerous retinue, might dismiss his disciples for some time, and Peter and Andrew amongst the rest; who hereupon returned home to the exercise of their calling, where he found them afterwards.

4. It was now somewhat more than a year since our Lord, having entered upon the public stage of action, constantly "went about doing good, healing the sick, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom;† residing usually at Capernaum, and the parts about it, where, by the constancy of his preaching, and the reputation of his miracles, his fame spread about all those countries; by means whereof multitudes of people from all parts flocked to him, greedily desirous to become his auditors. And what wonder, if the parched and barren earth thirsted for the showers of heaven? It happened that our Lord retiring out of the city, to enjoy the privacies of contemplation upon the banks of the sea of Galilee, it was not long before the multitude found him out; to avoid the crowd and press whereof he stept into a ship,‡ or fisher-boat, that lay near to the shore, which belonged to Peter (who, together with his companions, after a tedious and unsuccessful night, were gone ashore to wash and dry their nets.) He who might have commanded, was yet pleased to entreat Peter (who by this time was returned into his ship) to put a little from the shore. Here being sat, he taught the people, who stood along

* 1 Cor. i. 20—25.

† John i. 37.

* John i. 42.

† Luke v. 1.

† Matt. iv. 23.

upon the shore to hear him. Sermon ended, he resolved to seal up his doctrine with a miracle, that the people might be the more effectually convinced that "he was a teacher come from God." To this purpose, he bade Simon launch out further, and cast his net into the sea: Simon tells him they had done it already, that they had been fishing all the last night, but in vain; and if they could not succeed then (the most proper season for that employment) there was less hope to speed now, it being probably about noon. But because where God commands it is not for any to argue, but obey, at our Lord's instance he let down the net, which immediately enclosed so great a multitude of fishes that the net began to break, and they were forced to call to their partners, who were in a ship hard by them, to come to their assistance. A draught so great that it loaded both their boats, and that so full that it endangered their sinking before they could get safe to shore: an instance wherein our Saviour gave an ocular demonstration that, as Messiah, God had "put all things under his feet, not only fowls of the air, but the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea."*

5. Amazed they were all at this miraculous draught of fishes; whereupon Simon, in an ecstasy of admiration, and a mixture of humility and fear, threw himself at the feet of Christ, and prayed him to depart from him, as a vile and sinful person. So evident were the appearances of Divinity in this miracle, that he was overpowered and dazzled with its brightness and lustre, and reflecting upon himself, could not but think himself unworthy the presence of so great a person, so immediately sent from God; and considering his own state, (conscience being hereby more sensibly awakened,) was afraid that the divine vengeance might pursue and overtake him. But our Lord, to abate the edge of his fears, assures him that this miracle was not done to amaze and terrify him, but to strengthen and confirm his faith; that now he had nobler work and employment for him; instead of catching fish, he should, by persuading men to the obedience of the gospel, catch the souls of men: and accordingly he commanded him and his brother to follow him; (the same command which presently after he gave to the two sons of Zebedee.) The word was no sooner spoken, and they landed, but disposing their concerns in the hands of friends, (as we may presume prudent and reasonable men would,) they immediately left all, and followed him; and from this time Peter and the rest became his constant and inseparable disciples, living under the rules of his discipline and institutions.

6. From hence they returned to Capernaum, where our Lord, entering into Simon's house, (the place in all likelihood where he was wont to lodge during his residence in that city) found his mother-in-law visited with a violent fever.† No privileges afford an exemption from the ordinary laws of human nature; Christ, under her roof, did not protect this woman from the assaults and invasions of a fever. "Lord, behold he whom thou

lovest is sick,"* as they said concerning Lazarus. Here a fresh opportunity offered itself to Christ of exerting his divine power. No sooner was he told of it but he came to her bed-side, rebuked the paroxysm, commanded the fever to be gone, and taking her by the hand to lift her up, in a moment restored her to perfect health and ability to return to the business of her family; all cures being equally easy to Omnipotence.

SECTION III.

Of St. Peter, from his election to the Apostolate till the confession which he made of Christ.

OUR Lord being now to elect some peculiar persons as his immediate vicegerents upon earth, to whose care and trust he might commit the building up of his church, and the planting that religion in the world for which he himself came down from heaven; in order to it, he privately, over night, withdrew himself into a solitary mountain,‡ (commonly called the mount of Christ, from his frequent repairing thither; though some of the ancients will have it to be mount Tabor,) there to make his solemn address to heaven for a prosperous success on so great a work. Herein leaving an excellent copy and precedent to the governors of his church, how to proceed in setting apart persons to so weighty and difficult an employment. Upon this mountain we may conceive there was an oratory, or place of prayer, (probably intimated by St. Luke's *ἡ προσευχή*, for such *proseuchas*, or houses of prayer, usually uncovered and standing in the fields, the Jews had in several places,) wherein our Lord continued all night, not in one continued and entire act of devotion, but probably by intervals and repeated returns of duty.

2. Early the next morning his disciples came to him, out of whom he made choice of twelve to be his apostles,† that they might be the constant attendants upon his person, to hear his discourses, and be eye-witnesses of his miracles; to be always conversant with him while he was upon earth, and afterwards to be sent abroad, up and down the world, to carry on that work which he himself had begun; whom, therefore, he invested with the power of working miracles, which was more completely conferred upon them after his ascension into heaven. Passing by the several fancies and conjectures of the ancients, why our Saviour pitched upon the just number of twelve, (whereof before,) it may deserve to be considered whether our Lord, being now to appoint the supreme officers and governors of his church, which the apostle styles the "commonwealth of Israel,"|| might not herein have a more peculiar allusion to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of the several tribes; or to the constant heads and rulers of those twelve tribes, of which the body of the Jewish nation did consist: especially since he himself seems elsewhere to give countenance to

* Psalm viii. 6, 7, 8.

† Matt. viii. 14; Mark i. 29; Luke iv. 38.

* John xi. 3.

† Luke vi. 12.

‡ Matt. x. 1; Mark iii. 14; Luke vi. 13.

|| Ephes. ii. 12.

it, when he tells the apostles that "when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory," that is, be gone back to heaven, and have taken full possession of his evangelical kingdom, which principally commenced from his resurrection, that then "they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;"* that is, they should have great power and authority in the church, such as the power of the keys, and other rights of spiritual judicature and sovereignty, answerable in some proportion to the power and dignity which the heads and rulers of the twelve tribes of Israel did enjoy.

3. In the enumeration of these twelve apostles, all the evangelists constantly place St. Peter in the front, and St. Matthew† expressly tells us that he was the first; that is, he was the first that was called to be an apostle: his age also, and the gravity of his person more particularly qualifying him for a primacy of order amongst the rest of the apostles, as that without which no society of men can be managed or maintained. Less than this, as none will deny him, so, more than this neither Scripture nor primitive antiquity do allow him. And now it was that our Lord actually conferred that name upon him which before he had promised him. "Simon he surnamed Peter."‡ It may here be inquired, when and by whom the apostles were baptized. That they were, is unquestionable, being themselves appointed to confer it upon others; but when or how the Scripture is altogether silent. Nicephorus, from no worse an author, as he pretends, than Euodius, St. Peter's immediate successor in the see of Antioch, tells us, that of all the apostles Christ baptized none but Peter with his own hands; that Peter baptized Andrew and the two sons of Zebedee, and they the rest of the apostles. This, if so, would greatly make for the honor of St. Peter. But alas! his authority is not only suspicious but supposititious, in a manner deserted by St. Peter's best friends, and the strongest champions of his cause. Baronius himself, however, sometimes willing to make use of him, elsewhere confesses that this epistle of Euodius is altogether unknown to any of the ancients. As for the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, which to the same purpose he quotes out of Sophronius, (though not Sophronius but Johannes Moschus, as is notoriously known, be the author of that book,) besides that it is delivered upon an uncertain report, pretended to have been alleged in a discourse between one Dionysius, bishop of Ascalon, and his clergy, out of a book of Clemens not now extant; his authors are much alike, that is, of no great value and authority.

4. Amongst these apostles our Lord chose a triumvirate, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, to be his more intimate companions, whom he admitted more familiarly than the rest unto all the more secret passages and transactions of his life. The first instance of which was on this occasion:—Jairus,|| a ruler of the synagogue, had a daughter desperately sick, whose disease, having baffled all the arts of physic, was only curable by the immediate agency of the God of nature. He there-

fore, in all humility, addresses himself to our Saviour; which he had no sooner done but servants came post to tell him that it was in vain to trouble our Lord, for that his daughter was dead. Christ bids him not despond; if his faith held out there was no danger. And suffering none to follow him but Peter, James, and John, he goes along with him to the house; where he was derided by the sorrowful friends and neighbors, for telling them that she was not perfectly dead. But our Lord entering in, with the commanding efficacy of two words, restored her at once both to life and perfect health.

5. Our Lord after this preached many sermons, and wrought many miracles; amongst which none more remarkable than his feeding a multitude of five thousand men, besides women and children, but with five loaves and two fishes;* of which, nevertheless, twelve baskets of fragments were taken up. Which being done, and the multitude dismissed, he commanded the apostles to take ship, it being now near night, and to cross over to Capernaum, whilst he himself, as his manner was, retired to a neighboring mountain, to dispose himself to prayer and contemplation. The apostles were scarce got into the middle of the sea, when on a sudden a violent storm and tempest began to arise, whereby they were brought into present danger of their lives. Our Saviour, who knew how the case stood with them, and how much they labored under infinite pains and fears, having himself caused this tempest for the greater trial of their faith, a little before morning (for so long they remained in this imminent danger) immediately conveyed himself upon the sea, where the waves received him, being proud to carry their master. He who refused to gratify the devils, when tempting him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, did here commit himself to a boisterous and instable element, and that in a violent storm, walking upon the water as if it had been dry ground. But that infinite power that made and supports the world, as it gave rules to all particular beings, so can, when it pleaseth, countermand the laws of their creation, and make them act contrary to their natural inclinations. If God say the word, the sun will stand still in the middle of the heavens; if, Go back, it will retrocede, as upon the dial of Ahaz: if he command it, the heavens will become as brass, and the earth as iron, and that for three years and a half together, as in the case of Elijah's prayer: If he say to the sea, Divide, it will run upon heaps, and become on both sides as firm as a wall of marble. Nothing can be more natural than for the fire to burn, and yet at God's command it will forget its nature, and become a screen and a fence to the three children in the Babylonian furnace. What heavier than iron, or more natural than for gravity to tend downwards? yet, when God will have it, iron shall float like cork on the top of the water. The proud and raging sea, that naturally refuses to bear the bodies of men while alive, became here as firm as brass, when commanded to wait upon and do homage to the God of nature. Our Lord walking toward the ship, as if he had an intention to pass it, he was espied by them, who presently

* Matt. xix. 28.

† Matt. x. 2.

‡ Mark iii. 11.

|| Mark v. 22.

* Matt. xiv. 17.

thought it to be the apparition of a spirit. Hereupon they were seized with great terror and consternation, and their fears were, in all likelihood, heightened by the vulgar opinion, that there are evil spirits that choose rather to appear in the night than by day. While they were in this agony, our Lord, taking compassion on them, calls to them, and bids them not be afraid, for that it was no other than he himself. Peter (the eagerness of whose temper carried him forward to all bold and resolute undertakings) entreated our Lord, that if it was he, he might have leave to come upon the water to him. Having received his orders, he went out of the ship, and walked upon the sea to meet his master. But when he found the wind to bear hard against him, and the waves to rise round about him, whereby, probably, the sight of Christ was intercepted, he began to be afraid; and the higher his fears arose the lower his faith began to sink, and together with that, his body to sink under water: whereupon, in a passionate fright, he cried out to our Lord to help him; who, reaching out his arm, took him by the hand, and set him again upon the top of the water, with this gentle reproof: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" It being the weakness of our faith that makes the influences of the divine power and goodness to have no better effect upon us. Being come to the ship, they took them in; where our Lord no sooner arrived, but the winds and waves, observing their duty to their sovereign Lord, and having done the errand which they came upon, mannerly departed and vanished away, and the ship in an instant was at the shore. All that were in the ship being strangely astonished at this miracle, and fully convinced of the divinity of his person, came and did homage to him, with this confession: "Of a truth thou art the Son of God." After which they went ashore, and landed in the country of Genesareth, and there more fully acknowledged him before all the people.

6. The next day, great multitudes flocking after him, he entered into a synagogue at Capernaum; and taking occasion from the late miracle of the loaves, which he had wrought amongst them, he began to discourse concerning himself, as the "true manna,"* and the "bread that came down from heaven;" largely opening unto them many of the more sublime and spiritual mysteries, and the necessary and important duties of the gospel. Hereupon a great part of his auditory who had hitherto followed him, finding their understandings gruelled with these difficult and uncommon notions, and that the duties he required were likely to grate hard upon them, and perceiving now that he was not the Messiah they took him for, whose kingdom should consist in an external grandeur and plenty, but was to be managed and transacted in a more inward and spiritual way; hereupon fairly left him in open field, and henceforth quite turned their backs upon him. Whereupon our Lord, turning about to his apostles, asked them whether they also would go away from him? Peter (spokesman generally for all the rest) answered, whither they should go to mend and better their condition; should they return back to Moses! alas! he laid "a yoke upon them which

neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. Should they go to the Scribes and Pharisees? they would feed them with stones instead of bread, obtrude human conditions upon them for divine dictates and commands. Should they betake themselves to the philosophers amongst the Gentiles? they were miserably blind and shortsighted in their notions of things, and their sentiments and opinions not only different from, but contrary to one another. No, it was he only had "the words of eternal life," whose doctrine could instruct them in the plain way to heaven; that they had fully assented to what both John and he had said concerning himself; that they were fully persuaded, both from the efficacy of his sermons which they heard, and the powerful conviction of his miracles, which they had seen, that he was "the Son of the living God," the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. But notwithstanding this fair and plausible testimony, he tells them that they were not all of this mind; that there was a satan amongst them, one that was moved by the spirit and impulse, and that acted according to the rules and interest of the devil: intimating Judas, who should betray him. So hard is it to meet with a body of so just and pure a constitution wherein some rotten member or distempered part is not to be found.

SECTION IV.

Of St. Peter, from the time of his Confession till our Lord's last Passover.

It was some time since our Saviour had kept his third passover at Jerusalem,* when he directed his journey towards Cæsarea Philippi; where by the way, having, like a careful master of his family, first prayed with his apostles, he began to ask them (having been more than two years publicly conversant amongst them) what the world thought concerning him. They answered, that the opinions of men about him were various and different; that some took him for John the Baptist lately risen from the dead; between whose doctrine, discipline, and way of life, in the main, there was so great a correspondence. That others thought he was Elias; probably judging so from the gravity of his person, freedom of his preaching, the fame and reputation of his miracles; especially since the Scriptures assured them he was not dead, but taken up into heaven, and had so expressly foretold that he should return back again. That others looked upon him as the prophet Jeremiah alive again, of whose return the Jews had great expectations, inasmuch that some of them thought the soul of Jeremiah was re-inspired into Zacharias. Or if not thus, at least that he was one of the more eminent of the ancient prophets, or that the soul of some of these persons had been breathed into him: the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, first broached and propagated by Pythagoras, being at this time current among the Jews, and

* John vi. 32.

* Mark viii. 27: Matt. xvi. 21: Luke ix. 18.

owned by the Pharisees as one of their prime notions and principles.*

2. This account not sufficing, our Lord comes closer and nearer to them; tells them, it was no wonder if the common people were divided into these wild thoughts concerning him; but since they had been always with him, had been hearers of his sermons, and spectators of his miracles, he inquired what they themselves thought of him. Peter, ever forward to return an answer, and therefore, by the fathers, frequently styled "the mouth of the apostles," told him, in the name of the rest, that he was the Messiah, "the Son of the living God," promised of old in the law and the prophets, heartily desired and looked for by all good men, anointed and set apart by God to be the King, Priest, and Prophet of his people. To this excellent and comprehensive confession of St. Peter's, our Lord returns this great eulogy and commendation: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven:" that is, this faith which thou hast now confessed is not human, contrived by man's wit, or built upon his testimony, but upon those notions and principles which I was sent by God to reveal to the world, and those mighty and solemn attestations which he has given from heaven, to the truth both of my person and my doctrine. And because thou hast so freely made this confession, therefore "I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." That is, that as thy name signifies a stone, or rock, such shalt thou thyself be, firm, solid, and immovable in building of the church; which shall be so orderly erected by thy care and diligence, and so firmly founded upon that faith which thou hast now confessed, that all the attempts and assaults which the powers of hell can make against it shall not be able to overturn it. Moreover, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven:" that is, thou shalt have that spiritual authority and power within the church, whereby, as with keys, thou shalt be able to shut and lock out obstinate and impenitent sinners, and, upon their repentance, to unlock the door and take them in again: and what thou shalt thus regularly do, shall be owned in the court above, and ratified by God in heaven.

3. Upon these several passages, the champions of the church of Rome mainly build the unlimited supremacy and infallibility of the bishops of that see; with how much truth and how little reason it is not my present purpose to discuss. It may suffice here to remark, that though this place does

very much tend to exalt the honor of Peter, yet is there nothing herein personal and peculiar to him alone, as distinct from, and preferred above the rest of the apostles. Does he here make confession of Christ's being the Son of God? Yet, besides that herein he spake but the sense of all the rest, this was no more than what others had said as well as he, yea before he was so much as called to be a disciple. Thus Nathanael, at his first coming to Christ, expressly told him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."* Does our Lord here style him a rock? All the apostles are elsewhere equally called foundations; yea, said to be the "twelve foundations upon which the wall of the new Jerusalem,"† that is, the evangelical church, is erected; and sometimes others of them besides Peter are called pillars, as they have relation to the church already built. Does Christ here promise the keys to Peter? that is, power of governing, and of exercising church censures, and absolving penitent sinners? The very same is elsewhere promised to all the apostles, and almost in the very same terms and words: "If thine offending brother prove obstinate, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee an heathen and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."‡ And elsewhere, when ready to leave the world, he tells them: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."§ By all which it is evident, that our Lord did not here give any personal prerogative to St. Peter, as universal pastor and head of the Christian church, much less to those who were to be his successors in the see of Rome; but that as he made his confession in the name of the rest of the apostles, so what was here promised unto him was equally intended unto all.—Nor did the more considering and judicious part of the fathers (however giving a mighty reverence to St. Peter) ever understand it in any other sense. Sure I am, that Origin tells us, that every true Christian that makes this confession with the same spirit and integrity which St. Peter did, shall have the same blessing and commendation from Christ conferred upon him.

4. The holy Jesus, knowing the time of his passion to draw on, began to prepare the minds of his apostles against that fatal hour; telling them what hard and bitter things he should suffer at Jerusalem, what affronts and indignities he must undergo, and be at last put to death, with all the arts of torture and disgrace, by the decree of the Jewish Sanhedrim.¶ Peter, whom our Lord had infinitely encouraged and endeared to him, by the great things which he had lately said concerning him, so that his spirits were now afloat, and his passions ready to overrun the banks, not able to endure a thought that so much evil should befall his master, broke out into an over-confident and unseasonable interruption of him: "He took him

* The Jews had long since imbibed the love of Grecian philosophy, which began to be current among them from the time of Alexander. And as the Christians of Alexandria afterwards mingled Platonism with the gospel, so the Pharisees, but by doing much more force to both systems, mingled the doctrines of Pythagoras with those of Moses; or rather with the fanciful comments by which their rabbis had corrupted the pure word of Scripture. This system is alluded to in the account of the man born blind John ix. 3.—Ed.

* John i. 49. † Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 20; Gal. ii. 9.
‡ Matt. xviii. 17, 18. § John xx. 21, 23.
¶ Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 22.

and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." Besides his great kindness and affection to his master, the minds of the apostles were not yet thoroughly purged from the hopes and expectations of a glorious reign of the Messiah; so that Peter could not but look upon these sufferings as unbecoming and inconsistent with the state and dignity of the Son of God; and therefore thought good to advise his Lord to take care of himself, and, while there was time, to prevent and avoid them. This our Lord, who valued the redemption of mankind infinitely before his own ease and safety, resented at so high a rate that he returned upon him with this tart and stinging reproof: "Get thee behind me, Satan:" the very same treatment which he once gave to the devil himself, when he made that insolent proposal to him, "to fall down and worship him."* Though in Satan it was the result of pure malice and hatred, in Peter only an error of love and great regard. However, our Lord could not but look upon it as a mischievous and diabolical counsel, prompted and promoted by the great adversary of mankind. Away therefore, says Christ, with thy hellish and pernicious counsel: "Thou art an offence unto me," in seeking to oppose and undermine that great design for which I purposely came down from heaven: in this, "thou savourest not the things of God, but those that be of men," in suggesting to me those little shifts and arts of safety and self-preservation, which human prudence and the love of men's own selves are wont to dictate to them: by which, though we may learn Peter's mighty kindness to our Saviour, yet that herein he did not take his measures right; a plain evidence that his infallibility had not taken place.

5. About a week after this, our Saviour being to receive a type and specimen of his future glorification, took with him his three more intimate apostles, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,† and went up into a very high mountain, which the ancients generally conceived to have been Mount Tabor, a round and very high mountain, situate in the plains of Galilee. And now was even literally fulfilled what the Psalmist had spoken: "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name."‡ For what greater joy and triumph than to be peculiarly chosen to be the holy mount, whereon our Lord, in so eminent a manner, "received from God the Father honor and glory," and made such magnificent displays of his divine power and majesty? For while they were here earnestly employed in prayer, (as seldom did our Lord enter upon any eminent action but he first made his address to heaven,) he was suddenly transformed into another manner of appearance; such a lustre and radiancy darted from his face, that the sun itself shines not brighter at noon-day: such beams of light reflected from his garments as outdid the light itself that was round about them; so exceeding pure and white that the snow might blush to compare with it; nor could the fuller's art purify any thing into half that whiteness; an evident and sensible representation of the glory of that state wherein the just shall "walk in white, and

shine as the sun, in the kingdom of the Father." During this heavenly scene, there appeared Moses and Elias, (who, as the Jews say, shall come together,) clothed with all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of the death and sufferings which he was shortly to undergo, and his departure into heaven. Behold here together the three greatest persons that ever were the ministers of heaven: Moses, under God, the institutor and promulgator of the law; Elias, the great reformer of it, when under its deepest degeneracy and corruption; and the blessed Jesus, the Son of God, who came to take away what was weak and imperfect, and to introduce a more manly and rational institution, and to communicate the last revelation which God would make of his mind to the world. Peter and the two apostles that were with him were, in the mean time, fast asleep; heavy through want of natural rest, (it being probably night when this was done,) or else overpowered with these extraordinary appearances, which the frailty and weakness of their present state could not bear, were fallen into a trance; but now awaking, were strangely surprised to behold our Lord surrounded with so much glory, and those two great persons conversing with him: knowing who they were, probably by some particular marks and signatures that were upon them, or else by immediate revelation, or from the discourse which passed betwixt Christ and them, or possibly from some communication which they themselves might have with them. While these heavenly guests were about to depart, Peter, in a great rapture and ecstacy of mind, addressed himself to our Saviour, telling him how infinitely they were pleased and delighted with their being there; and, to that purpose, desiring his leave that they might erect three tabernacles, one for him, one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he was thus saying, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed the two great ministers, and wrapped them up; out of which came a voice: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him:" which when the apostles heard, and saw the cloud coming over themselves, they were seized with great consternation, and fell upon their faces to the ground; whom our Lord gently touched, bade them arise and disband their fears; whereupon, looking up, they saw none but their master, the rest having vanished and disappeared. In memory of these great transactions, Bede tells us, that in pursuance of St. Peter's petition about the three tabernacles, there were afterwards three churches built upon the top of this mountain, which, in after times, were had in great veneration; which might possibly give some foundation to that report which one makes, that in his time there were showed the ruins of those three tabernacles which were built according to St. Peter's desire.

6. After this, our Lord and his apostles having travelled through Galilee,* the gatherers of the tribute-money came to Peter, and asked him, whether his master was not obliged to pay the tribute, which God, under the Mosaic law, commanded to be yearly paid by every Jew above twenty years old, to the use of the temple; which so con-

* Luke iv. 8. † Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix. 2.
‡ Psalm lxxxix. 12.

* Matt. xvii. 24.

tinued to the times of Vespasian, under whom the temple being destroyed, it was by him transferred to the use of the capitol at home, being to the value of half a shekel, or fifteen-pence of our money. To this question of theirs, Peter positively answers, Yes ; having his master would never be backward, either "to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, or unto God the things that are God's." Peter going into the house to give an account to his master, and to know his mind concerning it, Christ prevented him with this question : "What thinkest thou, Simon, of whom do earthly kings exact tribute, of their own children" and family, or from other people ? Peter answered, Not from their own servants and family, but from strangers. To which our Lord presently replied, that then, according to his own argument and opinion, both he himself, as being the Son of God, and they, whom he had taken to be his menial and domestic servants, were free from this tax of head-money, yearly to be paid to God. But rather than give offence, by seeming to despise the temple, and to undervalue that authority that had settled this tribute, he resolves to put himself to the expense and charges of a miracle, and therefore commanded Peter to go to the sea, and take up the first fish which came to his hook, in whose mouth he should find a piece of money, (a stater, in value a shekel, or half-a-crown,) which he took and gave to the collectors, both for his master and himself.

7. Our Lord, after this, discoursing to them how to carry themselves towards their offending brethren, Peter, being desirous to be more particularly informed in this matter, asked our Saviour, how oft a man was obliged to forgive his brother, in case of offence and trespass, whether seven times were not enough.* He told him, that upon his neighbor's repentance, he was not only bound to do it "seven times, but until seventy times seven : " that is, he must be indulgent to him, as oft as the offender returns and begs it, and heartily professes his sorrow and repentance : which he further illustrates by a plain and excellent parable, and thence draws this conclusion, that the same measures, either of compassion or cruelty, which men show to their fellow-brethren, they themselves shall meet with at the hands of God, the supreme ruler and justiciary of the world. It was not long after, when a brisk young man addressed himself to our Saviour, to know of him by what methods he might best attain eternal life ; † our Lord, to humble his confidence, bid him "sell his estate, and give it to the poor" and, putting himself under his discipline, he should have a much better "treasure in heaven." The man was rich, and liked not the counsel, nor was he willing to purchase happiness at such a rate, and accordingly went away under great sorrow and discontent. Upon which Christ takes occasion to let them know, how hardly those men would get to heaven, who built their comfort and happiness upon the plenty and abundance of these outward things. Peter, taking hold of this opportunity, asked, what return they themselves should have, who had quitted and renounced whatever they had for his sake and service. Our Saviour answers, that no man should be a loser by his ser-

vice ; that for their parts, they should be recompensed with far greater privileges ; and that whoever should forsake houses or lands, kindred or relations, out of love to him and his religion, should enjoy them again, with infinite advantages, in this world, if consistent with the circumstances of their state, and those troubles and persecutions which would necessarily arise from the profession of the gospel : however, they should have what would make infinite amends for all—eternal life in the other world.

8. Our Saviour, in order to his last fatal journey to Jerusalem, that he might the better comply with the prophecy that went before him, sent two of his apostles, who in all probability were Peter and John, with an authoritative commission to fetch him an ass to ride on ;* (he had none of his own ; he who "was rich, for our sakes made himself poor ;" he lived upon charity all his life, had neither an ass to ride on, nor a house where to lay his head ; no, nor after his death a tomb to lie in, but what the charity of others provided for him ;) whereon being mounted, and attended with the festivities of the people, he set forward in his journey ; wherein there appears an admirable mixture of humility and majesty : the ass he rode on became the meanness and meekness of a prophet ; but his arbitrary commission for the fetching it, and the ready obedience of its owners, spake the prerogative of a king ; the palms borne before him, the garments strewed in his way, and the joyful hosannahs and acclamations of the people, proclaim at once both the majesty of a prince and the triumph of a Saviour ; for such expressions of joy we find were usual in public and festival solemnities. Thus the historian, describing the emperor Commodus's triumphant return to Rome, tells us, that the senate and whole people of Rome, to testify their mighty kindness and veneration for him, came out of the city to meet him, carrying palms and laurels along with them, and throwing about all sorts of flowers that were then in season. In this manner our Lord being entered the city, he soon after retired to Bethany, whence he despatched Peter and John to make preparation for the passover ; giving them instructions where he would have it kept ; † accordingly they found the person he had described to them, whom they followed home to his house. Whether this was the house of John the Evangelist, as (Nicephorus tells us,) situate near Mount Sion, or of Simon the leper, or of Nicodemus, or of Joseph of Arimathea, as others severally conjecture, seeing none of the evangelists have thought fit to tell us, it may not become us curiously to inquire.

SECTION V.

Of St. Peter, from the last Passover till the Death of Christ.

ALL things being now prepared, our Saviour with his apostles comes down for the celebration of the passover : and being entered into the house, they

* Matt. xviii. 21.

† Matt. xix. 16 ; Mark x. 17 ; Luke xviii. 18.

* Matt. xxi. 1.

† Matt. xxvi. 17 ; Mark xiv. 12 ; Luke xxii. 7.

all orderly took their places. Our Lord, who had always taught them by his practice, no less than by his doctrine, did now particularly design to teach them humility and charity by his own example: and that the instance might be the greater, he underwent the meanest offices of the ministry. Towards the end, therefore, of the paschal supper, he arose from the table, and laying aside his upper garment, (which, according to the fashion of those eastern countries, being long, was unfit for action,) and himself taking a towel, and pouring water into a bason, he began to wash all the apostles' feet;* not disdaining those of Judas himself. Coming to Peter, he would by no means admit an instance of so much condescension. What! the master to do this to the servant! the Son of God to so vile a sinner! This made him a second time refuse it: "Thou shalt never wash my feet." But our Lord soon corrects his imprudent modesty, by telling him, that "if he washed him not he could have no part with him:" insinuating the mystery of this action, which was to denote remission of sin, and the purifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ to be poured upon all true Christians. Peter, satisfied with the answer, soon altered his resolution: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." If the case be so, let me be washed all over, rather than come short of my portion in thee. This being done, he returned again to the table, and acquainted them with the meaning and tendency of this mystical action, and what force it ought to have upon them towards one another. The washing itself denoted their inward and spiritual cleansing by the blood and spirit of Christ, symbolically typified and represented by all the washings and baptisms of the Mosaic institution: the washing of the feet respected our entire sanctification of our whole spirit, soul, and body, no part being to be left impure. And then, that all this should be done by so great a person, their Lord and master preached to their very senses a sermon of the greatest humility and condescension; and taught them how little reason they had to boggle at the meanest offices of kindness and charity towards others, when he himself had stooped to so low an abasement towards them. And now he began more immediately to reflect upon his sufferings, and upon him who was to be the occasion of them; telling them, that one of them would be the traitor to betray him. Whereat they were strangely troubled, and every one began to suspect himself, till Peter (whose love and care for his master commonly made him start sooner than the rest) made signs to St. John, who lay in our Saviour's bosom, to ask him particularly who it was; which our Saviour presently showed, by making them understand that it was Judas Iscariot; who not long after left the company.

2. And now our Lord began the institution of his supper; that great solemn institution which he was resolved to leave behind him, to be constantly celebrated in all ages of the church, as the standing monument of his love in dying for mankind.—For now he told them, that he himself must leave them, and that "whither he went they could not come."† Peter, not well understanding what he meant, asked him whither it was that he was

going. Our Lord replied, it was to that place whither he could not now follow him; but that he should do it afterwards: intimating the martyrdom he was to undergo for the sake of Christ. To which Peter answered, that he knew no reason why he might not follow him, seeing that if it was even to the laying down of his life for his sake, he was most ready and resolved to do it. Our Lord liked not this over-confident presumption, and therefore told him, they were great things which he promised, but that he took not the true measures of his own strength, nor espied the snares and designs of Satan, who desired no better an occasion than this to sift and winnow him; but that he had prayed to heaven for him, "that his faith might not fail;" by which means being strengthened himself, he should be obliged to strengthen and confirm his brethren. And whereas he so confidently assured him, that he was ready to go along with him, not only into prison but even to death itself, our Lord plainly told him, that notwithstanding all his confident and generous resolutions, before the cock crowed twice, that is, before three of the clock in the morning, he would that very night three several times deny his master. With which answer our Lord wisely rebuked his confidence, and taught him (had he understood the lesson) not to trust to his own strength, but entirely to depend upon him who is able to keep us from falling. Withal insinuating, that though by his sin he would justly forfeit the divine grace and favor, yet upon his repentance he should be restored to the honor of the apostolate, as a certain evidence of the divine goodness and indulgence to him.

3. Having sung a hymn, and concluded the whole affair, he left the house where all these things had been transacted, and went with his apostles unto the Mount of Olives;* where he again put them in mind how much they would be offended at those things which he was now to suffer; and Peter again renewed his resolute and undaunted promise of suffering and dying with him; yea, out of an excessive confidence, told him that "though all the rest should forsake and deny him, yet would not he deny him." How far will zeal and an indiscreet affection transport even a good man into vanity and presumption. Peter questions others, but never doubts himself. So natural is self-love, so apt are we to take the fairest measures of ourselves. Nay, though our Lord had but a little before once and again reproved this vain humor, yet does he still not only persist but grow up in it. So hardly are we brought to espy our own faults, or to be so thoroughly convinced of them as to correct and reform them.—This confidence of his inspired all the rest with a mighty courage, all the apostles assuring him of their constant and unshaken adhering to him. Our Lord returning the same answer to Peter which he had done before. From hence they went down into the village of Gethsemane, where leaving the rest of the apostles, he, accompanied with none but Peter, James, and John, retired into a neighboring garden, (whither, Eusebius tells us, Christians even in his time were wont to come, solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven; and

* John xiii. 4. † John xiii. 36; Luke xxii. 31.

* Matt. xxvi 30; Mark, xiv. 26.

where, as the Arabian geographer informs us, a fair and stately church was built to the honor of the Virgin Mary,) to enter upon the ante-scene of the fatal tragedy that was now approaching; it bearing a very fit proportion (as some of the fathers have observed) that as the first Adam fell and ruined mankind in a garden, so a garden should be the place where the second Adam should begin his passion, in order to the redemption of the world. Gardens, which to us are places of repose and pleasure, and scenes of divertisement and delight, were to our Lord a school of temptation, a theatre of great horrors and sufferings, and the first approaches of the hour of darkness.

4. Here it was that the blessed Jesus labored under the bitterest agony that could fall upon human nature, which the holy story describes by words sufficiently expressive of the highest grief and sorrow; he was "afraid, sorrowful," and "very heavy;" yea, "his soul was" *περιλυτος*, "exceeding sorrowful," and that "even unto death;" he was "sore amazed and very heavy;" he was "troubled," *εταραχθη*, his soul was shaken with a vehement commotion; yea he was "in an agony," a word by which the Greeks were wont to represent the greatest conflicts and anxieties. The effect of all which was, that "he prayed more earnestly," offering up "prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears," as the apostle expounds it; and sweat, "as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." What this bloody sweat was, and how far natural or extraordinary, I am not now concerned to inquire. Certain it is it was a plain evidence of the most intense grief and sadness; for if an extreme fear or trouble will many times cast us into a cold sweat, how great must be the commotion and conflict of our Saviour's mind, which could force open the pores of his body, locked up by the coldness of the night, and make not drops of sweat, but "great drops," or (as the word *δρομει* signifies) "clods" of blood to issue from them! While our Lord was thus contending with these ante-passions, the three apostles, whom he had left at some distance from him, being tired out with watching, and disposed by the silence of the night, were fallen fast asleep. Our Lord, who had made three several addresses unto heaven, that, if it might consist with his Father's will, this bitter "cup might pass from him," (expressing herein the harmless and innocent desires of human nature, which always studies its own preservation,) between each of them came to visit the apostles; and calling to Peter, asked him, whether they could not "watch" with him "one hour;" advising them to "watch and pray," that they entered "not into temptation;" adding this argument, that "the spirit indeed" was "willing," but that "the flesh" was "weak;" and that therefore there was the more need that they should stand upon their guard.—Observe here the incomparable sweetness, the generous candor of our blessed Saviour, to pass so charitable a censure upon an action from whence malice and ill-nature might have drawn monsters and prodigies, and have represented it black as the shades of darkness. The request which our Lord made to these apostles was infinitely reasonable, to watch with him in his bitter

agony; their company at least being some refreshment to one under such sad fatal circumstances; and this but for a little time, "one hour," it would soon be over, and then they might freely consult their own ease and safety. It was their dear Lord and master whom they now were to attend upon, ready to lay down his life for them, sweating already under the first skirmishes of his sufferings, and expecting every moment when all the powers of darkness would fall upon him. But all these considerations were drowned in a profound security; the men were fast asleep, and though often awakened and told of it, regarded it not, as if nothing but ease and softness had been then to be dreamed of. An action that looked like the most prodigious ingratitude, and the highest unconcernedness for their Lord and master, and which one would have thought had argued a very great coldness and indifference of affection towards him. But he would not set it upon the tenters, nor stretch it to what it might easily have been drawn to; he imputes it not to their unthankfulness, or want of affection, nor to their carelessness of what became of him, but merely to their infirmity and the weakness of their bodily temper, himself making the excuse, when they could make none for themselves: "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Hereby teaching us to put the most candid and favorable construction upon those actions of others which are capable of various interpretations, and rather with the bee to suck honey, than with the spider to draw poison from them. His last prayer being ended, he came to them, and told them with a gentle rebuke, that now they might "sleep on," if they pleased; that "the hour was at hand that he should be betrayed, and delivered into the hands of men."

5. While he was thus discoursing to them, a band of soldiers sent from the high priest, with the traitor Judas to conduct and direct them, rushed into the garden, and seized upon him; which when the apostles saw, they asked him whether they should attempt his rescue. Peter, (whose ungovernable zeal put him upon all dangerous undertakings,) without staying for an answer, drew his sword, and espying one more busy than the rest in laying hold upon our Saviour, which was Malchus, (who, though carrying kingship in his name, was but servant to the high priest,) struck at him with an intention to despatch him; but God overruling the stroke, it only cut off his right ear. Our Lord liked not this wild and unwarrantable zeal, and therefore entreated their patience, whilst he miraculously healed the wound; and turning to Peter, bade him put up his sword again: told him that they who unwarrantably used the sword should themselves perish by it; that there was no need of these violent and extravagant courses; that if he had a mind to be rid of his keepers he could ask his Father, who would presently send "more than twelve legions of angels" to his rescue and deliverance: but he must "drink the cup" which his Father had put into his hand; for how else should the Scriptures be fulfilled, which had expressly foretold "that these things must be?" Whereupon, all the apostles forsook him, and fled from him; and they who before in their promises were as bold as lions, now it came

to it, like fearful and timorous hares, ran away from him. Peter and John, though staying last with him, yet followed the same way with the rest, preferring their own safety before the concerns of their master.

6. No sooner was he apprehended by the soldiers, and brought out of the garden, but he was immediately posted from one tribunal to another,* brought first to Annas, then carried to Caiaphas, where the Jewish Sanhedrim met together in order to his trial and condemnation. Peter having a little recovered himself, and gotten loose from his fears, probably encouraged by his companion, St. John, returns back to seek his master, and finding them leading him to the high-priest's hall, followed afar off, to see what would be the event and issue: but coming to the door, could get no admittance, till one of the disciples who was acquainted there, went out and persuaded the servant who kept the door to let him in. Being led into the hall where the servants and officers stood round the fire, Peter also came thither to warm himself, where being espied by the servant-maid that let him in, she, earnestly looking upon him, charged him with being one of Christ's disciples, which Peter publicly denied before all the company, positively affirming that "he knew him not;" and presently withdrew himself into the porch, where he heard the cock crow: an intimation, one would have thought, which should have awakened his conscience into a quick sense of his duty, and the promise he had made unto his master. In the porch, another of the maids set upon him, charging him "that he also was one of them that had been with Jesus of Nazareth;" which Peter stoutly denied, saying that he "knew not Christ;" and the better to gain their belief to what he said ratified it with an oath. So natural is it for one sin to draw on another.

7. About an hour after, he was a third time set upon by a servant of the high-priest, Malchus's kinsman, whose ear Peter had lately cut off: by him he was charged to be one of Christ's disciples; yea, that his very speech betrayed him to be a Galilean:—for the Galileans, though they did not speak a different language, had yet a different dialect, using a more confused and barbarous, a broader and more unpolished way of pronunciation than the rest of the Jews; whereby they were easily distinguishable in their speaking from other men; abundant instances whereof there are extant in the Talmud at this day:—nay, not only gave this evidence, but added, that he himself had seen him with Jesus in the garden. Peter still resolutely denied the matter; and to add the highest accomplishment to his sin, ratified it not only with an oath, but a solemn curse and execration, that he was not the person, that he knew not the man. It is but a very weak excuse which St. Ambrose and some others make for this act of Peter's, in saying, "I know not the man." "He did well," says he, "to deny him to be man whom he knew to be God." St. Jerome takes notice of this pious and well-meant excuse made for Peter, though out of modesty he conceals the name of its author, but yet justly censures it as trifling and

frivolous, and which to excuse man from folly would charge God with falsehood: for if he did not deny him, then our Lord was out, when he said, that that night he "should thrice deny him;" that is, his person, and not only his humanity. Certainly the best apology that can be made for Peter is, that he quickly repented of this great sin; for no sooner had he done it, but the cock crew again; at which intimation our Saviour turned about, and earnestly looked upon him; a glance that quickly pierced him to the heart, and brought to his remembrance, what our Lord had once and again foretold him, how foully and shamefully he should deny him. Whereupon, not being able to contain his sorrow, he ran out of doors to give it vent, and "wept bitterly;" passionately bewailing his folly, and the aggravations of his sin; thereby endeavoring to make some reparation for his fault, and recover himself into the favor of heaven, and to prevent the execution of divine justice, by taking a severe revenge upon himself; by these penitential tears he endeavored to wash off his guilt; as indeed repentance is the next step to innocence.

SECTION VI.

Of St. Peter, from Christ's Resurrection till his Ascension.

WHAT became of Peter after his late prevarication, whether he followed our Saviour through the several stages of his trial, and personally attended as a mourner at the funeral of his master, we have no account left upon record. No doubt he staid at Jerusalem, and probably with St. John, together with whom we first find him mentioned, when both set forwards to the sepulchre; which was in this manner. Early on that morning whereon our Lord was to return from the grave, Mary Magdalene,* and some other devout and pious women, brought spices and ointments, with a design to embalm the body of our crucified Lord. Coming to the sepulchre at sun-rising, and finding the door open, they entered in, where they were suddenly saluted by an angel, who told them that Jesus was risen, and bade them go and acquaint his apostles, and particularly Peter, that he was returned from the dead; and that he would go before them into Galilee, where they should meet with him. Hereupon they returned back, and acquainted the apostles with what had passed, who beheld the story as the product of a weak and heated fancy. But Peter and John presently hastened towards the garden;† John, being the younger and nimbler, outran his companion, and came first thither: where he only looked, but entered not in, either out of fear in himself, or a great reverence to our Saviour. Peter, though behind in space was before in zeal, and being elder and more considerate, came and resolutely entered in, where they found nothing but the linen cloths lying together in one place, and the napkin that was about his head wrapped together in another; which being disposed with so much care and order, showed (what was falsely suggested

* Matt. xxvi. 57; Mark xiv. 53; Luke xxii. 51; John xviii. 12.

* Mark xvi. 1. † Luke xxiv. 12. John xx. 2.

by the Jews) that our Saviour's body was not taken away by thieves, who are wont more to consult their escape than how to leave things orderly disposed behind them.

2. The same day about noon we may suppose it was, that our Lord himself appeared alone to Peter; being assured of the thing, though not so precisely of the time. That he did so St. Paul expressly tells us;* and so did the apostles to the two disciples that came from Emmaus, "The Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Simon;"† which probably intimates, that it was before his appearing to those two disciples. And indeed we cannot but think that our Lord would hasten the manifestation of himself to him, as compassionating his case, being overwhelmed with sorrow for the late shameful denial of his master; and was therefore willing in the first place to honor him with his presence, at once to confirm him in the article of his resurrection, and to let him see that he was restored to the place which before he had in his grace and favor. St. Paul mentioning his several appearances after his resurrection, seems to make this the first of them, that "he was seen of Cephas." Not that it was simply the first, for he first appeared to the women. But, as Chrysostom observes, it was the first that was made to men. He was first seen by him who most desired to see him. He also adds several probable conjectures, why our Lord first discovered himself to Peter: as, that it required a more than ordinary firmness and resolution of mind to be able to bear such a sight; for they who beheld him after others had seen him, and had heard their frequent testimonies and reports, had had their faith greatly prepared and encouraged to entertain it; but he who was to be honored with the first appearance had need of a bigger and more undaunted faith, lest he should be overborne, with such a strange and unwonted sight. That Peter was the first that had made a signal confession of his master, and therefore it was fit and reasonable that he should first see him alive after his resurrection. That Peter had lately denied his Lord, the grief whereof lay hard upon him; that therefore our Saviour was willing to administer some consolation to him, and, as soon as might be, to let him see that he had not cast him off, like the kind Samaritan, he made haste to help him, and to pour oil into his wounded conscience.

3. Some time after this, the apostles began to resolve upon their journey into Gallilee, as he himself had commanded them. If it be inquired why they went no sooner, seeing this was the first message and intimation they had received from him, St. Ambrose's resolution seems very rational, that our Lord indeed had commanded them to go thither, but that their fears for some time kept them at home; not being as yet fully satisfied in the truth of his resurrection, till our Lord, by often appearing to them, had confirmed their minds, and put the case beyond all dispute. They went, as we may suppose, in several companies, lest going all in one body they should awaken the power and malice of their enemies, and alarm the care and vigilancy of the state, which, by reason of the noise that our Saviour's trial and execution had

made up and down the country, was yet full of jealousies and fears. We find Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, and the two sons of Zebedee, and two more of the disciples, arrived at some town about the sea of Tiberias; where the providence of God guiding the instance of their employment, Peter, accompanied with the rest, returns to his old trade of fishing.* They labored all night, but caught nothing. Early in the morning, a grave person, probably in the habit of a traveller, presents himself upon the shore, and calling to them, asked them whether they had any meat. When they told him no, he advised them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, that so the miracle might not seem to be the effect of chance, and they should not fail to speed. They did so, and the net presently inclosed so great a draught that they were scarce able to drag it ashore. St. John, amazed with the strangeness of the matter, told Peter that surely this must be the Lord, whom the winds, and the sea, and all the inhabitants of that watery region were so ready to obey. Peter's zeal presently took fire, notwithstanding the coldness of the season, and impatient of the least moment's being kept from the company of his dear Lord and master, without any consideration of the danger to which he exposed himself, he girt his fisher's coat about him, and throwing himself into the sea, swam to shore, not being able to stay till the ship could arrive, which came presently after. Landing, they found a fire ready made, and fish laid upon it, either immediately created by his divine power, or which came to the shore of its own accord, and offered itself to his hand; which notwithstanding, he commands them to bring of the fish which they had lately caught, and prepare it for their dinner, he himself dining with them; both that he might give them an instance of mutual love and fellowship, and also assure them of the truth of his human nature, since his return from the dead.

4. Dinner being ended, our Lord more particularly addressed himself to Peter, urging him to the utmost diligence in his care of souls: and because he knew that nothing but a mighty love to himself could carry him through the troubles and hazards of so dangerous and difficult an employment; an employment attended with all the impediments which either the perverseness of men, or the malice and subtilty of the devil could cast in the way to hinder it; therefore he first inquired of him, whether he loved him more than the rest of the apostles, herein mildly reproving his former overconfident resolution, that "though all the rest should deny him, yet would not he deny him." Peter modestly replied, not censuring others, much less preferring himself before them, that our Lord knew the integrity of his affection towards him. This question he puts three several times to Peter who as often returned the same answer: it being but just and reasonable, that he who by a threefold denial had given so much cause to question, should now by a threefold confession give more than ordinary assurance of his sincere affection to his master. Peter was a little troubled at this frequent questioning of his love, and therefore more expressly appeals to our Lord's omniscieny

* 1 Cor. xv. 5.

† Luke xxiv. 34.

* John xxi. 3.

that he who knew all things must needs know that he loved him. To each of these confessions our Lord added this signal trial of his affection ; then, "Feed my sheep;" that is, faithfully instruct and teach them, carefully rule and guide them ; persuade, not compel them ; feed, not fleece nor kill them. And so it is plain St. Peter himself understood it, by the charge which he gives to the guides and rulers of the church, that "they should feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock."*— But that by feeding Christ's sheep and lambs, here commanded to St. Peter, should be meant a universal and uncontrollable monarchy and dominion over the whole Christian church, and that over the apostles themselves and their successors in ordinary, and this power and supremacy solely invested in St. Peter, and those who were to succeed him in the see of Rome, is so wild an inference, and such a melting down words to run into any shape, as could never with any face have been offered, or been possible to have been imposed upon the belief of mankind, if men had not first subdued their reason to their interest, and captivated both to an implicit faith and a blind obedience. For granting that our Lord here addressed his speech only unto Peter, yet the very same power, in equivalent terms, is elsewhere indifferently granted to all the apostles, and in some measure to the ordinary pastors and governors of the church : as when our Lord told them, that "all power" was given him "in heaven and in earth," by virtue whereof they should "go teach and baptize all nations," and "preach the gospel to every creature : " that they should "feed God's flock, rule well," inspect and "watch over" those over whom they had the authority and rule.† Words of as large and more express signification than those which were here spoken to St. Peter.

5. Our Lord having thus engaged Peter to a cheerful compliance with the dangers that might attend the discharge and execution of his office, now particularly intimates to him what that fate was that should attend him ; telling him, that though when he was young he girt himself, lived at his own pleasure, and went whither he pleased ; yet when he was old he should stretch forth his hands, and another should gird and bind him, and lead him whether he had no mind to go ; intimating, as the evangelist tells us, "by what death he should glorify God ;" that is, by crucifixion, the martyrdom which he afterwards underwent. And then, rising up, commanded him to follow him ; by this bodily attendance mystically implying his conformity to the death of Christ, that he should follow him in dying for the truth and testimony of the gospel. It was not long after that our Lord appeared to them, to take his last farewell of them ; when leading them out unto Bethany, a little village upon the mount of Olives, he briefly told them, that they were the persons whom he had chosen to be the witnesses both of his death and resurrection ; a testimony which they should bear to him in all parts of the world ; in order to which

he would, after his ascension, pour out his Spirit upon them in larger measures than they had hitherto received, that they might be the better fortified to grapple with that violent rage and fury wherewith both men and devils would endeavor to oppose them ; and that in the mean time they should return to Jerusalem, and stay till these miraculous powers were from on high conferred upon them. His discourse being ended, laying his hands upon them, he gave them his solemn blessing ; which done, he was immediately taken from them, and being attended with a glorious guard and train of angels, was received up into heaven. Antiquity tells us, that in the place where he last trod upon the rock, the impression of his feet did remain, which could never afterwards be filled up or impaired ; over which Helena, mother of the great Constantine, afterwards built a little chapel, called the Chapel of the Ascension ; in the floor whereof, upon a whitish kind of stone, modern travellers tell us, that the impression of his foot is showed at this day ; but it is that of his right foot only, the other being taken away by the Turks, and, as it is said, kept in the temple at Jerusalem. Our Lord being thus taken from them, the apostles were filled with a greater sense of his glory and majesty than while he was wont familiarly to converse with them ; and having performed their solemn adorations to him, returned back to Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost, which was shortly after conferred upon them.— "They worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."* They who lately were overwhelmed with sorrow at the very mention of their Lord's departure from them, entertained it now with joy and triumph ; being fully satisfied of his glorious advancement at God's right hand, and of that particular care and providence which they were sure he would exercise towards them, in pursuance of those great trusts he had committed to them.

SECTION VII.

Of St. Peter's Acts, from our Lord's Ascension till the Dispersion of the Church.

THE holy Jesus being gone to heaven, the apostles began to act according to the power and commission he had left with them. In order whereunto, the first thing they did after his ascension was to fill up the vacancy in their college, lately made by the unhappy fall and apostacy of Judas. To which end, no sooner were they returned to Jerusalem, but they went *eis νεκρωον*, "into an upper room." Where this *νεκρωον* was, whether in the house of St. John, or of Mary, John-Mark's mother, or in some of the out-rooms belonging to the temple, (for the temple had over the cloisters several chambers for the service of the priests and levites, and as repositories where the consecrated vessels and utensils of the temple were laid up ; though it be not probable that the Jews, and especially the priests, would suffer the apostles and their company to be so near the temple,) I stand

* 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.
† Luke xxiv. 50.

† Acts i. 8.

* Luke xxiv. 52.

not to inquire. It is certain that the Jews usually had their *υπερωα*, private oratories, in the upper parts of their houses, for the more private exercises of their devotions. Thus Daniel had his upper chamber,* (*τα υπερωα* the Seventy render it,) whither he was wont to retire to pray to his God: and Benjamin the Jew tells us, that in his time (Ann. Christ. 1172) the Jews at Babylon were wont to pray both in their synagogues, "and in that ancient upper chamber of Daniel, which the prophet himself built." Such an *υπερωων*, or upper chamber, was that wherein St. Paul preached at Troas;† and such probably this where the apostles were now met together: and in all likelihood the same where our Lord had lately kept the passover, where the apostles and the church were assembled on the day of Pentecost, and which was then the usual place of their religious assemblies, as we have elsewhere observed more at large. Here the church being met, to the number of about a hundred and twenty, Peter, as president of the assembly, began to speak; and, applying himself to the whole congregation, proposed to them the choice of a new apostle. And it is the remark which St. Chrysostom makes upon this passage, that Peter herein would do nothing without the common consent and approbation, assuming no peculiar supereminent power and authority to himself. He put them in mind that Judas, one of our Lord's apostles, being betrayed by his own covetous and insatiable mind, had lately fallen from the honor of his place and ministry;‡ that this was no more than what the prophet had long since foretold should come to pass; and that the rule and oversight in the church, which had been committed to him, should be devolved upon another; that therefore it was highly necessary that one should be substituted in his room, and especially such a one as had been familiarly conversant with our Saviour, from first to last, that so he might be a competent witness both of his doctrine and miracles, his life and death, but especially of his resurrection from the dead. For seeing no evidence is so valid and satisfactory as the testimony of an eye-witness, the apostles all along mainly insisted on this, that they delivered no other things concerning our Saviour to the world than what they themselves had seen and heard. And seeing this rising from the dead was a principle likely to meet with a great deal of opposition, and which would hardliest gain belief and entertainment with the minds of men, therefore they principally urged this at every turn, that "they were eye-witnesses of his resurrection," that they had seen, felt, eaten, and familiarly conversed with him after his return from the grave. That therefore such an apostle might be chosen, two candidates were proposed, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias. And having prayed that the divine Providence would immediately guide and direct the choice, they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, who was accordingly admitted into the number of the twelve apostles.

2. Fifty days since the last passover being now run out, made way for the feast of Pentecost;‡ at what time the great promise of the Holy Ghost

was fully made good unto them. The Christian assembly being met together for the public services of their worship, on a sudden a sound like that of a mighty wind rushed in upon them; representing the powerful efficacy of that divine Spirit that was now to be communicated to them: after which there appeared little flames of fire, which, in the fashion of cloven tongues, not only descended, but sat upon each of them; probably to note their perpetual enjoyment of this gift upon all occasions, that when necessary they should never be without it: not like the prophetic gifts of old, which were conferred but sparingly, and only at some particular times and seasons. As the "seventy elders prophesied and ceased not;"* but it was only at such times "as the Spirit came down and rested upon them." Hereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, which enabled them in an instant to speak several languages which they had never learned, and probably never heard of, together with other miraculous gifts and powers. Thus as the confounding of languages became a curse to the old world, separating men from all mutual offices of kindness and commerce, rendering one part of mankind barbarians to another; so here, the multiplying of languages became a blessing, being intended as the means to bring men of all nations "into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God;" into the fellowship of that religion that would banish discords, cement differences, and unite men's hearts in the bond of peace. The report of so sudden and strange an action presently spread itself into all corners of the city, and there being at that time at Jerusalem multitudes of Jewish proselytes, "devout men out of every nation under heaven, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, (or Persians,) the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia Minor, from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the parts of Libya and Cyrene, from Rome, from Crete, from Arabia, Jews and proselytes, (probably drawn thither by the general report and expectation which had spread itself over all the eastern parts, and in a manner over all places of the Roman empire, of the Jewish Messiah that about this time should be born at Jerusalem,) they no sooner heard of it, but universally flocked to this Christian assembly; where they were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking to them in their own native languages, so various, so vastly different from one another. And it could not but exceedingly increase the wonder, to reflect upon the meanness and inconsiderableness of the persons, neither assisted by natural parts, nor polished by education, nor improved by use and custom; which three things philosophers require to render a man accurate and extraordinary in any art or discipline, *φωσις γαρ ανευ μαθησεως τυφλον μαθησις διχα φησεως ελλιπης* ασησις χωρις ημφοιν ατελες, says Plutarch: "Natural disposition without instruction is blind; instruction without a genius and disposition is defective; and exercise without both is lame and imperfect." Whereas these disciples had not one of these to set them off; their parts were mean, below the rate of the common people; the Galileans being generally accounted the rudest and

* Dan. vi. 20. † Acts xx. 8. ‡ Acts i. 15. || Acts ii. 1.

* Numb. xi. 25.

most stupid of the whole Jewish nation: their education had been no higher than to catch fish, and to mend nets; nor had they been used to plead causes, or to deliver themselves before great assemblies; but spoke on a sudden, not premeditated discourses, not idle stories, or wild roving fancies, but the great and admirable works of God, and the mysteries of the gospel, beyond human apprehensions to find out; and this delivered in almost all the languages of the then known world. Men were severally affected with it, according to their different tempers and apprehensions. Some admiring, and not knowing what to think of it; others deriding it, said that it was nothing else but the wild raving effect of drunkenness and intemperance. At so wild a rate are men of profane minds wont to talk, when they take upon them to pass their censure in the things of God.

3. Hereupon the apostles rose up, and Peter, in the name of the rest, took this occasion of discoursing to them. He told them that this scandalous slander proceeded from the spirit of malice and falsehood; that their censure was as uncharitable as it was unreasonable; that "they that are drunken are drunk in the night;" that it was against nature and custom for men to be in drink so soon, too early for such a suspicion to take place, it being now but about nine of the clock, the hour for morning prayer, till when men even of ordinary sobriety and devotion, on festival days were wont to fast. That these extraordinary and miraculous passages were but the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy, the fulfilling of what God had expressly foretold should come to pass in the times of the Messiah; that Jesus of Nazareth had evidently approved himself to be the Messiah sent from God by many unquestionable miracles, of which they themselves had been eye-witnesses; and though, by God's permission, who had determined by this means to bring about the salvation of mankind, they had wickedly crucified and slain him, yet that God had raised him from the dead: that it was not possible he should be holden always under the dominion of the grave; nor was it consistent with the justice and goodness of God, and especially with those divine predictions which had expressly foretold he should rise again from the dead; David having more particularly foretold that his "flesh should rest in hope;" that "God would not leave his soul in hell, neither suffer his Holy One to see corruption;" but "would make known to him the ways of life;" that this prophecy could not be meant concerning David himself, by whom it was spoken, he having many ages since been turned to ashes, his body resolved into rottenness and putrefaction, his tomb yet visible among them, from whence he never did return; that therefore it must needs have been prophetically spoken concerning Christ, having never been truly fulfilled in any but him, who both died, and was risen again, whereof they were witnesses. Yea, that he was not only risen from the dead, but had ascended into heaven, and, according to David's prediction, "sat down on God's right hand, until he made his enemies his footstool:" which could not be primarily meant of David, he never having yet bodily ascended into heaven; that therefore the whole house of Israel

ought to believe, and take notice, that this very Jesus, whom they had crucified, was the person whom God had appointed to be the Messiah and the Saviour of his church.

4. This discourse, in every part of it, like so many daggers, pierced them to the heart; who thereupon cried out to Peter and his brethren to know what they should do. Peter told them, that there was no other way, than by a hearty and sincere repentance, and a being baptized into the religion of this crucified Saviour, to expiate their guilt, to obtain pardon of sin, and the gifts and benefits of the Holy Ghost. That upon these terms the promises of the new covenant, which was ratified by the death of Christ, did belong to them and their children, and to all that should effectually believe and embrace the gospel: farther pressing and persuading them, by doing thus, to save themselves from that unavoidable ruin and destruction, which this wicked and untoward generation of obstinate, unbelieving Jews were shortly to be exposed to. The effects of his preaching were strange and wonderful: "as many as believed were baptized;" there being "that day added to the church," no less than "three thousand souls." A quick and plentiful harvest; the late sufferings of our Saviour, as yet fresh bleeding in their memories, the present miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, that appeared upon them, the zeal of his auditors, though heretofore misplaced and misguided; and above all, the efficacy of divine grace, contributing to this numerous conversion.

5. Though the converting so vast a multitude might justly challenge a place amongst the greatest miracles, yet the apostles began now more particularly to exercise their miraculous power. Peter and John,* going up to the temple, about three o'clock in the afternoon, towards the conclusion of one of the solemn hours of prayer, (for the Jews divided their day into four greater hours, each quarter containing three lesser under it, three of which were public and stated times of prayer, instituted (say they) by the three great patriarchs of their nation; the first, from six o'clock in the morning till nine, called hence "the third hour of the day," instituted by Abraham; this was called morning prayer: the second from nine till twelve, called "the sixth hour," and this hour of prayer ordained by Isaac; this was called "mid-day prayer:" the third, from twelve to three in the afternoon, called "the ninth hour," appointed by Jacob, called "evening prayer;") and at this hour it was, that these two apostles went up to the temple, where they found a poor impotent cripple, who, though above forty years old, had been lame from his birth, lying "at the beautiful gate of the temple," and asking an alms of them. Peter, earnestly looking on him, told him he had no money to give him; but that he would give him that which was a great deal better, restore him to his health; and lifting him up by the hand, commanded him "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to rise up and walk." The word was no sooner said, than the thing was done: immediately the nerves and sinews were enlarged, and the joints returned to their proper use. The man,

* Acts iii. 1.

standing up, went into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. The beholding so sudden and extraordinary a cure, begot great admiration in the minds of the people, whose curiosity drew them to the apostles to see those who had been the authors of it. Which Peter taking notice of, began to discourse to them to this effect: That there was no reason they should wonder at them, as if by their own skill and art they had wrought this cure, it being entirely done in the name of their crucified master, by the power of that very Christ, that holy and just person, whom they themselves had denied, and delivered up to Pilate, and preferred a rebel and a murderer before him, when his judge was resolved to acquit him: and that though they had put him to death, yet that they were witnesses, that God had raised him up again, and that he was gone to heaven, where he must remain till the times of the general restitution. That he presumed that this in them, as also in their rulers, was, in a great measure, the effect of ignorance, and the not being thoroughly convinced of the greatness and divinity of his person; which yet God made use of for the bringing about his wise and righteous designs, the accomplishing of what he had foretold concerning Christ's person and sufferings, by Moses and Samuel, and all "the holy prophets which had been since the world began." That therefore it was now high time for them to repent and turn to God, that their great wickedness might be expiated, and that when Christ should shortly come in judgment upon the Jewish nation, that might be a time of comfort and refreshing to them, which would be one of vengeance and destruction to other men: that they were the peculiar persons to whom the blessings of the promises did primarily appertain, and unto whom God, in the first place, sent his Son, that he might derive his blessing upon them, by "turning them away from their iniquities." While Peter was thus discoursing to the people in one place, we may suppose that John was preaching to them in another; and the success was answerable: the apostles cast out the seed, and God immediately "gave the increase." There being, by this means, no fewer than five thousand brought over to the faith:* though it is possible the whole body of believers might be comprehended in that number.

6. While the apostles were thus preaching, the priests and Sadducees† (who particularly appeared in this business, as being enemies to all tumults, or whatever might disturb their present ease and quiet, the only portion of happiness they expected; besides that they hated Christianity, because so expressly asserting the resurrection,) being vexed to hear this doctrine vented amongst the people, intimated to the magistrate, that this concourse might probably tend to an uproar and insurrection; whereupon they came with the captain of the temple, (commander of the tower of Antonia, which stood close by, on the north side of the temple; wherein was a Roman garrison to prevent or suppress, especially at festival times, popular tumults and uproars,) who seized on the apostles, and put them into prison. The next day they were convened before the Jewish Sanhedrim;

and being asked by what power and authority they had done this, Peter resolutely answered, that as to the cure done to this impotent person, it should be known to them and all the Jews, that it was perfectly wrought in the name of that Jesus of Nazareth whom they themselves had crucified, and God had raised from the dead; and whom, though they had thrown him by as waste and rubbish, yet God had made "head of the corner;" and that there was no other way wherein they, or others, could expect salvation, but by this crucified Saviour. Great was the boldness of the apostles, admired by the Sanhedrim itself, in this matter; especially if we consider that this probably was the very court that had so lately sentenced and condemned their master; and being fleshed in such sanguinary proceedings, had no other way but to go on and to justify one cruelty by another: that the apostles did not say these things in corners and behind the curtain, but to their very faces, and that in the open court of judicature, and before all the people. That the apostles had not been used to plead in such public places, nor had been polished with the arts of education, but were ignorant, unlearned men, known not to be versed in the study of the Jewish law.

7. The council (which all this while had beheld them with a kind of wonder, and now remembered that they had been the companions and attendants of the late crucified Jesus) commanded them to withdraw; and debated amongst themselves what they should do with them. The miracle they could not deny, the fact being so plain and evident: and therefore resolved strictly to charge them that they should preach no more in the name of Jesus. Being called in again, they acquainted them with the resolution of the council; to which Peter and John replied, that they could by no means yield obedience to it; appealing to themselves, whether it was not more fit that they should "obey God rather than" them: and that they could not but "testify what they had seen and heard." Nor did they in this answer make any undue reflection upon the power of the magistrates, and the obedience due to them; it being a ruled case, by the first dictates of reason, and the common vote and suffrage of mankind, that parents and governors are not to be obeyed when their commands interfere with the obligations under which we stand to a superior power. All authority is originally derived from God, and our duty to him may not be superseded by the laws of any authority deriving from him. And even Socrates himself, in a parallel instance, when persuaded to leave off his excellent way of institution and instructing youth, and to comply with the humor of his Athenian judges to save his life, returned this answer: "That indeed he loved and honored the Athenians, but yet resolved to obey God rather than them." An answer almost the same, both in substance and words, with that which was here given by our apostles. In all other cases, where the laws of the magistrate did not interfere with the commands of Christ, none more loyal, none more compliant than they. As, indeed, no religion in the world ever secured the interests of civil authority like the religion of the gospel. It posi-

* Acts iv. 4.

† Verse 1.

tively charges "every soul," of what rank or condition soever, "to be subject to the higher powers," as a divine ordinance and institution; and that "not for wrath only, but for conscience' sake:" it "puts men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and obey magistrates: to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, both to the king as supreme, and unto governors as unto them that are sent by him; for so is the will of God." So far is it from allowing us to violate their persons, that it suffers us not boldly to censure their actions, "to revile the gods, despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities;" or to vilify and injure them so much as by a dishonorable thought; commanding us, when we cannot obey, to suffer the most rigorous penalties imposed upon us with calmness, and "to possess our souls with patience." Thus when these two apostles were shortly after again summoned before the council, commanded no more to preach the Christian doctrine, and to be scourged for what they had done already, though they could not obey the one, they cheerfully submitted to the other, without any peevish or tart reflections, but went away rejoicing. But what the carriage of Christians was in this matter, in the first and best ages of the gospel, we have in another place* sufficiently discovered to the world. We may not withhold our obedience, till the magistrate invades God's throne, and countermands his authority; and may then appeal to the sense of mankind, whether it be not most reasonable that God's authority should first take place, as the apostles here appealed to their very judges themselves. Nor do we find that the Sanhedrim did except against the plea. At least, whatever they thought, yet not daring to punish them for fear of the people, they only threatened them, and let them go: who thereupon presently returned to the rest of the apostles and believers.

8. The church exceedingly multiplied by these means: and that so great a company, most whereof were poor, might be maintained, they generally sold their estates, and brought the money to the apostles, to be by them deposited in one common treasury, and thence distributed according to the several exigencies of the church; which gave occasion to this dreadful instance: Ananias and his wife Sapphira,† having taken upon them the profession of the gospel, according to the free and generous spirit of those times, had consecrated and devoted their estate to the honor of God; and the necessities of the church; and accordingly sold their possessions, and turned them into money. But as they were willing to gain the reputation of charitable persons, so were they loath wholly to cast themselves upon the Divine Providence, by letting go all at once; and therefore privately withheld part of what they had devoted, and bringing the rest, laid it at the apostles' feet; hoping herein they might deceive the apostles, though immediately guided by the Spirit of God. But Peter, at his first coming in, treated Ananias with these sharp inquiries: why he would suffer Satan to fill his heart with so big a wickedness, as by keeping back of his estate, "to think to deceive

the Holy Ghost?" That before it was sold it was wholly at his own disposal; and after, it was perfectly in his own power fully to have performed his vow: so that it was capable of no other interpretation, than that herein he had not only abused and injured men, but mocked God, and, what in him lay, lied to, and cheated the Holy Ghost; who, he knew, was privy to the most secret thoughts and purposes of his heart. This was no sooner said, but suddenly, to the great terror and amazement of all that were present, Ananias was arrested with a stroke from heaven, and fell down dead to the ground. Not long after, his wife came in, whom Peter entertained with the same severe reproofs wherewith he had addressed her husband; adding, that the like sad fate and doom should immediately seize upon her; who thereupon dropped down dead; thus, as she had been co-partner with him in the sin, becoming sharer with him in the punishment. An instance of great severity, filling all that heard of it with fear and terror, and acting as a seasonable prevention of that hypocrisy and dissimulation wherewith many might possibly think to have imposed upon the church.

9. This severe case being extraordinary, the apostles usually exerted their power in such miracles as were more useful and beneficial to the world; curing all manner of diseases, and dispossessing devils; inasmuch that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them upon beds and couches, that at least Peter's shadow, as he passed by, might come upon them.* These astonishing miracles could not but mightily contribute to the propagation of the gospel, and convince the world that the apostles were more considerable persons than they took them for; poverty and meanness being no bar to true worth and greatness. And, methinks, Erasmus's reflection is here not unseasonable: that no honor or sovereignty, no power or dignity was comparable to this glory of the apostle; that the things of Christ, though in another way, were more noble and excellent than any thing that this world could afford. And therefore he tells us, that when he beheld the state and magnificence wherewith pope Julius II. appeared, first at Bononia and then at Rome, equalling the triumphs of a Pompey or a Cæsar, he could not but think how much all this was below the greatness and majesty of St. Peter; who converted the world, not by power or armies, not by engines or artifices of pomp and grandeur, but by faith in the power of Christ, and drew it to the admiration of himself: and the same state (says he) would no doubt attend the apostles' successors, were they men of the same temper and holiness of life. The Jewish rulers, alarmed with this news, and awakened with the growing numbers of the church, send to apprehend the apostles, and cast them into prison. But God, who is never wanting to his own cause, despatched that night an angel from heaven to open the prison doors, commanding them to repair to the temple, and to the exercise of their ministry; which they did early in the morning, and there taught the people. How unsuccessful are the projects of the wisest statesmen, when God frowns upon them! how little do any counsels against

* Primitive Christianity, part iii. chap. 4.

† Acts v. 1.

* Acts v. 15.

heaven prosper! In vain is it to shut the doors where God is resolved to open them: the firmest bars, the strongest chains cannot hold, when once God has designed and decreed our liberty. The officers returning the next morning, found the prison shut and guarded, but the prisoners gone: wherewith they acquainted the council, who much wondered at it; but being told where the apostles were, they sent to bring them, without any noise or violence, before the Sanhedrim; where the high-priest asked them how they durst go on to propagate that doctrine, which they had so strictly commanded them not to preach! Peter, in the name of the rest, told them that they must in this case "obey God rather than men:" that though they had so barbarously and contumeliously treated the Lord Jesus, yet that God had raised him up, and exalted him to be "a Prince and a Saviour," to give both "repentance and remission of sins:" that they were witnesses of these things, and so were those miraculous powers which the Holy Ghost conferred upon all true Christians. Vexed was the council with this answer, and began to consider how to cut them off. But Gamaliel, a grave and learned senator, having commanded the apostles to withdraw, bade the council take heed what they did to them; putting them in mind, that several persons had heretofore raised parties and factions, and drawn vast numbers after them, but that they had miscarried, and they and their designs come to nought: that therefore they should do well to let these men alone: that if their doctrines and designs were merely human, they would, in time, of themselves fall to the ground; but if they were of God, it was not all their power and policies would be able to defeat and overturn them; and that they themselves would herein appear to oppose the councils and designs of heaven: with this prudent and rational advice they were satisfied; and having commanded the apostles to be scourged, and charged them no more to preach this doctrine, restored them to their liberty: who, notwithstanding this charge and threatening, returned home in a kind of triumph, that they were accounted worthy to suffer in so good a cause, and to undergo shame and reproach for the sake of so good a master. Nor could all the hard usage they met with from men discourage them in their duty to God, or make them less zealous and diligent both publicly and privately to preach Christ in every place.

SECTION VIII.

Of St. Peter's Acts, from the dispersion of the Church at Jerusalem till his contest with St. Paul at Antioch.

THE church had been hitherto tossed with gentle storms; but now a more violent tempest overtook it, which began in the proto-martyr Stephen,* and was more vigorously carried on afterwards; by occasion whereof the disciples were dispersed. And God, who always brings good out of evil, hereby provided that the gospel should not be confined

only to Jerusalem. Hitherto the church had been crowded up within the city walls, and the religion had crept up and down in private corners; but the professors of it, being now dispersed abroad by the malice and cruelty of their enemies, carried Christianity along with them, and propagated it into the neighboring countries; accomplishing hereby an ancient prophecy, that "out of Sion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."* Thus God overrules the malice of men, and makes intended poison to become food or physic. That Divine Providence that governs the world, more particularly superintends the affairs and interests of his church, so that no weapon formed against Israel shall prosper; curses shall be turned into blessings, and that become an eminent means to enlarge and propagate the gospel, which they designed as the only way to suppress and stifle it. Amongst those that were scattered, Philip the deacon was driven down unto Samaria, where he preached the gospel, and confirmed his preaching by many miraculous cures, and dispossessing devils. In this city there was one Simon, who by magic arts and diabolical sorceries sought to advance himself into a great fame and reputation with the people, insomuch that they generally beheld him as the great power of God; for so the ancients tell us he used to style himself; giving out himself to be the first and chiefest Deity, the Father who is God over all: that is, that he was that which in every nation was accounted the supreme Deity. This man, hearing the sermons, and beholding the miracles that were done by Philip, presented himself amongst the numbers of believers, and was baptized with them. The apostles, who yet remained at Jerusalem, having heard of the great success of Philip's ministry at Samaria, thought good to send some of their number to his assistance; and accordingly deputed Peter and John, who came thither: where having prayed for, and laid their hands upon these new converts, they presently received the Holy Ghost. Simon the magician observing, that by laying on of the apostle's hands, miraculous gifts were conferred upon men, offered them a considerable sum of money to invest him with this power, that on whom he laid his hands they might receive the Holy Ghost. Peter, perceiving his rotten and insincere intentions, rejected his impious motion with scorn and detestation: "Thy money perish with thee." He told him that his heart was naughty and hypocritical; that he could have no share nor portion in so great a privilege; that it more concerned him to repent of so great a wickedness, and sincerely seek to God, that so the thought of his heart might be forgiven him; for that he perceived that he had a very vicious and corrupt temper and constitution of mind, and was as yet bound up under a very wretched and miserable state, displeasing to God, and dangerous to himself. The conscience of the man was a little startled with this, and he prayed the apostles to intercede with heaven, that God would pardon his sin, and that none of these things might fall upon him. But how little cure this wrought upon him we shall find elsewhere, when we shall again meet with him

* Acts viii. 1.

* Isaiah ii. 3.

afterwards. The apostles having thus confirmed the church at Samaria, and preached up and down in the villages thereabouts, returned back to Jerusalem, to join their counsel and assistance to the rest of the apostles.

2. The storm, though violent, being at length blown over, the church enjoyed a time of great calmness and serenity; during which Peter went out to visit the churches lately planted in those parts, by those disciples who had been dispersed by the persecution at Jerusalem. Coming down to Lydda, the first thing he did was to work a cure upon one Eneas, who being crippled with the palsy, had lain bedrid for eight years together. Peter coming to him, bade him in the name of Christ to arise; and the man was immediately restored to perfect health.* A miracle that was not confined only to his person, but being known abroad, generally brought over the inhabitants of that place. The fame of this miracle having flown to Joppa, a seaport town some six miles thence, the Christians there presently sent for Peter on this occasion. Tabitha, whose Greek name was Dorcas, a woman venerable for her piety and diffusive charity, was newly dead, to the great lamentation of all good men, and much more to the loss of the poor that had been relieved by her. Peter, coming to the house, found her dressed up for her funeral solemnity, and compassed about with the sorrowful widows, who showed the coats and garments wherewith she had clothed them, the badges of her charitable liberality. Peter, shutting all out, kneeled down and prayed; and then turning him to the body, commanded her to arise; and lifting her up by the hand, presented her in perfect health to her friends and those that were about her; by which he confirmed many, and converted more to the faith. After which he staid some considerable time at Joppa, lodging in the house of Simon a tanner.

3. While he abode in this city, retiring one morning to the house-top to pray;† (as the Jews frequently did, having thence a free and open prospect towards Jerusalem and the temple,) it being now near noon, which was the conclusion of one of their stated times of prayer, he found himself hungry, and called for meat; but while it was preparing, he himself fell into a trance, wherein was represented to him a large sheet let down from heaven, containing all sorts of creatures, clean and unclean; a voice at the same time calling to him, that he should rise, kill freely, and indifferently feed upon them. Peter, tenacious as yet of the rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, rejoined, that he could not do it, having never eaten any thing that was common or unclean. To which the voice replied, that what God had cleansed he should not account or call common. Which being done thrice, the vessel was again taken up into heaven, and the vision presently disappeared. By this symbolic representation, though Peter at present knew not what to make of it, God was teaching him a new lesson, and preparing him to go upon an errand and embassy, which the Spirit at the same time expressly commanded him to undertake. While he was in this doubtful posture of mind, three mes-

sengers knocked at the door, inquiring for him; from whom he received this account: that Cornelius, a Roman, captain of a band of Italian soldiers at Cæsarea, a person of great piety and religion, (being of the proselytes at the gate, who though not observing an exact conformity to the rites of the Mosaic law, did yet maintain some general correspondence with it, and lived under the obligation of the seven precepts of the sons of Noah,) had by an immediate command from God, sent for him. The next day Peter, accompanied with some of the brethren, went along with them; and the day after they came to Cæsarea: against whose arrival, Cornelius had summoned his friends and kindred to his house. Peter arriving, Cornelius (who was affected with a mighty reverence for so great a person) fell at his feet and worshipped him; a way of address frequent in those eastern countries towards princes and great men, but by the Greeks and Romans appropriated as a peculiar honor to the gods. Peter, rejecting the honor, as due only to God, entered into the house, where he first made his apology to the company, that though they could not but know, that it was not lawful for a Jew to converse in the duties of religion with those of another nation, yet that now God had taught him another lesson. And then proceeded particularly to inquire the reason of Cornelius's sending for him. Whereupon Cornelius told him, that four days since, being conversant in the duties of fasting and prayer, an angel had appeared to him, and told him, that his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God; that he should send to Joppa for one Simon Peter, who lodged in a tanner's house by the seaside, who should further make known his mind to him; that accordingly he sent, and being now come, they were there met to hear what he had to say to them. Where we see, that though God sent an angel to Cornelius to acquaint him with his will, yet the angel was only to direct him to the apostle for instruction in the faith; which no doubt was done, partly that God might put the greater honor upon an institution that was likely to meet with contempt and scorn enough from the world; partly to let us see that we are not to expect extraordinary and miraculous ways of teaching and information, where God affords ordinary means.

4. Hereupon Peter began this discourse; that by comparing things it was now plain and evident, that the partition wall was broken down; that God had no longer a particular kindness for nations and persons; that it was not the nation, but the religion; not the outward quality of the man, but the inward temper of the mind, that recommends men to God; that the devout and the pious, the righteous and the good man, wherever he be, is equally dear to heaven; that God has as much respect for a just and virtuous person in the wilds of Scythia, as upon Mount Sion: that the reconciling and making peace between God and man by Jesus Christ, was the doctrine published by the prophets of old; and of late, since the times of John, preached through Galilee and Judea: viz., that God had anointed and consecrated Jesus of Nazareth with divine powers and graces, in the exercise whereof he constantly went about to do good to men: that they had seen all he had done amongst the Jews;

* Acts ix. 32-34.

† Acts x. 9.

whom though they had slain and crucified, yet that God had raised him again the third day, and had openly showed him to his apostles and followers, whom he had chosen to be his peculiar witnesses, and whom to that end he had admitted to eat and drink with him after his resurrection, commanding them to preach the gospel to mankind, and to testify, that he was the person whom God had ordained to be the great judge of the world: that all the prophets with one consent bore witness of him; that this Jesus is he, in whose name whosoever believes, should certainly receive remission of sins. While Peter was thus preaching to them, the Holy Ghost fell upon a great part of his auditory, enabling them to speak several languages, and therein to magnify the giver of them. Whereat the Jews who came along with Peter did sufficiently wonder, to see that the gifts of the Holy Ghost should be poured upon the Gentiles. Peter seeing this, told the company, that he knew no reason why these persons should not be baptized, having received the Holy Ghost as well as they; and accordingly commanded them to be baptized: for whose further confirmation he staid some time longer with them. This act of Peter's made a great noise amongst the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem,* who, being lately converted from their Judaism, were as yet zealous for the religion of their country; and therefore severely charged Peter at his return, for his too familiar conversing with the Gentiles. See here the powerful prejudice of education. The Jews had for several ages conceived a radicated and inveterate prejudice against the Gentiles. Indeed the law of Moses commanded them to be peculiarly kind to their own nation; and the rites and institutions of their religion, and the peculiar form of their commonwealth, made them different from the fashion of other countries; a separation which, in after times, they drew into a narrower compass. Besides, they were mightily puffed up with their external privileges, that they were "the seed of Abraham," the people whom God had peculiarly chosen for himself, above all other nations in the world; and therefore, with a lofty scorn, proudly rejected the Gentiles as dogs and reprobates; utterly refusing to show them any office of common kindness and converse. We find the heathens frequently charging them with this rudeness and inhumanity. Juvenal accuses them, that they would not show a traveller the right way, nor give him a draught of water, if he were not of their religion. Tacitus tells us, that they had *adversus omnes alios hostile odium*, "a bitter hatred of all other people." Haman† represented them to Ahasuerus as "A people that would never kindly mix and correspond with any other; as different in their manners as in their laws and religion from other nations." The friends of Antiochus (as the historian reports) charged them, "That they alone of all others were the most unsociable people under heaven; that they held no converse or correspondence with any other, but accounted them as their mortal enemies: that they would not eat nor drink with men of another na-

tion, no nor so much as wish well to them; their ancestors having leavened them with an hatred of all mankind." This was their humor: and that the Gentiles herein did not wrong them, is sufficiently evident from their ordinary practice, and is openly avowed by their own writings. Nay, at their first coming over to Christianity, though one great design of it was to soften the manners of men, and to oblige them to a more extensive and universal charity, yet could they hardly quit this common prejudice; quarrelling with Peter for no other reason, but that he had eaten and drunken with the Gentiles; insomuch that he was forced to apologize for himself, and to justify his actions as immediately done by divine warrant and authority. And then, no sooner had he given them a naked and impartial account of the whole transaction, from first to last, but they presently turned their displeasure against him into thanks to God, that had granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life.

5. It was now about the end of Caligula's reign, when Peter, having finished his visitation of the new planted churches, was returned to Jerusalem. Not long after, Herod Agrippa,* grandchild to Herod the Great, having attained the kingdom, the better to ingratiate himself with the people, had lately put St. James to death. And finding that this gratified the vulgar, resolved to send Peter the same way after him. In order whereunto he apprehended him, cast him into prison, and set strong guards to watch him: the church in the mean time being very instant and importunate with heaven for his life and safety. The night before his intended execution, God purposely sent an angel from heaven, who coming to the prison, found him fast asleep between two of his keepers. So soft and secure a pillow is a good conscience, even in the confines of death, and the greatest danger. The angel raised him up, knocked off his chains, bade him gird on his garments and follow him. He did so; and having passed the first and second watch, and entered through the iron gate into the city, (which opened to them of its own accord,) after having passed through one street more, the angel departed from him. By this time Peter came to himself, and perceived that it was no vision, but a reality that had happened to him. Whereupon he came to Mary's house, where the church were met together at prayer for him. Knocking at the door, the maid who came to let him in, perceiving it was his voice, ran back to tell them that Peter was at the door; which they at first looked upon as nothing but the effect of a fright or fancy; but she still affirming it, they concluded that it was his angel, or some peculiar messenger sent from him. The door being opened, they were strangely amazed at the sight of him; but he briefly told them the manner of his deliverance, and charging them to acquaint the brethren with it, presently withdrew into another place. It is easy to imagine what a bustle and stir there was the next morning among the keepers of the prison, with whom Herod was so much displeased, that he commanded them to be put to death.

6. Some time after this it happened, that a con-

* Acts xi. 1.

† Ap. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xi. c. 6.

* Acts. xii. 1.

troverſy ariſing between the Jewish and the Gentile converts about the obſervation of the Mosaic law,* the minds of men were exceedingly diſquieted and diſturbed with it; the Jews zealouſly contending for circumciſion and the obſervance of the ceremonial law, to be joined with the belief and profeſſion of the goſpel, as equally neceſſary to ſalvation. To compoſe this difference, the beſt expedient that could be thought on, was to call a general council of the apoſtles and brethren, to meet together at Jeruſalem; which was done accordingly, and the caſe thoroughly ſcanned and canvassed. At laſt Peter ſtood up, and acquainted the ſynod, that God having made choice of him among all the apoſtles, to be the firſt that preached the goſpel to the Gentiles, God who was beſt able to judge of the hearts of men, had borne witneſs to them, that they were accepted of him, by giving them his Holy Spirit, as well as he had done to the Jews: having put no difference between the one and the other. That therefore it was a tempting and provoking God, to put a yoke upon the necks of the diſciples, which neither they themſelves nor their fathers were able to bear; their being ground enough to believe, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews ſhould be ſaved by the grace of the goſpel. After ſome other of the apoſtles had declared their judgments in the caſe, it was unanimouſly decreed, that except the temporary obſervance of ſome few particular things, equally convenient both for Jew and Gentile, no other burden ſhould be impoſed upon them: and ſo the decrees of the council being drawn up into a ſynodical epiſtle, were ſent abroad to the ſeveral churches, for allaying the heats and controverſies that had been raiſed about this matter.

7. Peter, ariſe after the celebration of the council, left Jeruſalem, and came down to Antioch,† where uſing the liberty which the goſpel had given him, he familiarly eat and converſed with the Gentile converts; accounting them, now that “the partition wall was broken down,” no longer “ſtrangers” and “foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold of God:” this he had been taught by the viſion of the ſheet let down from heaven; this had been lately decreed, and he himſelf had promoted and ſubſcribed it in the ſynod at Jeruſalem; this he had before practiſed towards Cornelius and his family, and juſtified the action to the ſatisfaction of his accuſers; and this he had here freely and innocently done at Antioch, till ſome of the Jewish brethren coming thither, for fear of offending and diſpleaſing them, he withdrew his converſe with the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold communion with uncircumciſed perſons; when yet he knew, and was fully ſatisfied, that our Lord had wholly removed all difference, and broken down the wall of ſeparation between Jew and Gentile. In which affair, as he himſelf acted againſt the light of his own mind and judgment, condemning what he had approved, and deſtroying what he had before built up; ſo hereby he confirmed the Jewish zealots in their inveterate error, caſt infinite ſcruples into the minds of the Gentiles, filling their conſciences with fears and diſſatisfactions, reviving the old feuds and preju-

dices between Jew and Gentile; by which means many others were enſnared; yea, the whole number of Jewish converts followed his example, ſeparating themſelves from the company of the Gentile Chriſtians. Yea, ſo far did it ſpread that Barnabas himſelf was carried away with the ſtream and torrent of this unwarrantable practice. St. Paul, who was at this time come to Antioch, unto whom Peter gave “the right hand of fellowſhip,” acknowledging his apoſtleſhip of the circumciſion, obſerving theſe evil and unevangelical actings, reſolutely withſtood Peter to the face, and publicly reprov'd him, as a perſon worthy to be blamed for his groſs prevarication in this matter; ſeverely expoſtulating and reaſoning with him, that he who was himſelf a Jew, and thereby under a more immediate obligation to the Mosaic law, ſhould caſt off that yoke himſelf, and yet endeavor to impoſe it upon the Gentiles, who were not in the leaſt under any obligation to it. A ſmart, but an impartial charge: and indeed ſo remarkable was this carriage of St. Paul towards our apoſtle, that though it ſet things right for the preſent, yet it made ſome noiſe abroad in the world. Yes, Porphyry himſelf, that acute and ſubtile enemy of Chriſtianity, makes uſe of it as an argument againſt them both; charging the one with error and falſhood, and the other with rudeneſs and incivility; and that the whole was but a compact of forgery and deceit, while the princes of the church did thus fall out among themſelves. And ſo ſenſible were ſome of this, in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, that rather than ſuch a diſhonor and diſgrace, as they accounted it, ſhould be reflected upon Peter, they tell us of two ſeveral Cephaſ's, one the apoſtle, the other one of the ſeventy diſciples; and that it was the laſt of theſe that was guilty of this prevarication, and whom St. Paul ſo vigorouſly reſiſted and reprov'd at Antioch. But for this pleaſible and well-meant evaſion the champions of the Romiſh church con them no great thanks at this day. Nay, St. Jerome long ſince fully confuted it in his notes upon this place.

SECTION IX.

Of St. Peter's Acts. from the end of the Sacred Story till his Martyrdom.

HITHERTO, in drawing up the life of this great apoſtle, we have had an infallible guide to conduct and lead us; but the ſacred ſtory breaking off here, forces us to look abroad, and to pick up what memoirs the ancients have left us in this matter; which we ſhall for the main diſgeſt according to the order wherein Baronius, and other eccleſiaſtic writers have diſpoſed the ſeries of St. Peter's life; reſerving what is juſtly questionable, to a more particular examination afterward. And that we may preſent the account more entire and perfect, we muſt ſtep back a little in point of time, that ſo we may go forward with greater advantage. We are to know, therefore, that during the time of peace and calmneſs which the church enjoyed after Saul's perſecution, when St. Peter went down to viſit the churches, he is ſaid to

* Acts xv. 1.

† Gal. ii. 11.

have gone to Antioch, where great numbers of Jews inhabited, and there to have planted the Christian faith. That he founded a church here Eusebius expressly tells us; and by others it is said, that he himself was the first bishop of this see. Sure I am that St. Chrysostom reckons it one of the greatest honors of that city, that St. Peter staid so long there, and that the bishops of it succeeded him in that see. The care and presidency of this church he had between six and seven years. Not that he staid there all that time, but that having ordered and disposed things to the best advantage, he returned to other affairs and exigencies of the church; confirming the new plantation, bringing in Cornelius and his family, and in him the first fruits of the Gentiles' conversion to the faith of Christ. After which he returned unto Jerusalem, where he was imprisoned by Herod, and miraculously delivered by an angel sent from heaven.

2. What became of Peter after his deliverance out of prison is not certainly known; probably he might preach in some parts a little further distant from Judæa, as we are told he did at Byzantium, and in the countries thereabout (though, I confess, the evidence to me is not convincing.) After this, he resolved upon a journey to Rome; where most agree he arrived about the second year of the emperor Claudius. Orosius tells us, that coming to Rome, he brought prosperity along with him to that city; for besides several other extraordinary advantages which at that time happened to it, this was not the least observable, that Camillus Scribonianus, governor of Dalmatia, soliciting the army to rebel against the emperor, the eagles, their military standard, remained so fast in the ground that no power nor strength was able to pluck them up. With which unusual accident the minds of the soldiers were surprised and startled; and turning their swords against the author of the sedition, continued firm and loyal in their obedience. Whereby a dangerous rebellion was prevented, likely enough otherwise to have broken out. This he ascribes to St. Peter's coming to Rome, and the first plantation of the Christian faith in that city; heaven beginning more particularly to smile upon that place at his first coming thither. It is not to be doubted, but that at his first arrival he disposed himself amongst the Jews his countrymen, who ever since the time of Augustus had dwelt in the region beyond Tiber.— But when afterwards he began to preach to the Gentiles, he was forced to change his lodging, and was taken in by one Pudens, a senator, lately converted to the faith. Here he closely plied his main office and employment, to establish Christianity in that place. Here we are told he met with Philo the Jew, lately come on his second embassy unto Rome, in the behalf of his countrymen at Alexandria, and to have contracted an intimate friendship and acquaintance with him. And now it was, says Baronius, that Peter being mindful of the churches which he had founded in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Asia the less, wrote his first epistle to them: which he probably infers hence, that St. Mark being yet with him at the time of the date of this epistle, it must be written at least some time this year; for that now it was that St. Mark was sent to preach and pro-

pagate the faith in Egypt. Next to the planting religion at Rome, he took care to propagate it in the western parts. And to that end, (if we may believe one of those that pretend to be his successors,) he sent abroad disciples unto several provinces; that so "their sound might go into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

3. It happened that after St. Peter had been several years at Rome, Claudius the emperor, taking the advantage of some seditions and tumults raised by the Jews, by a public edict banished them out of Rome; in the number of whom, St. Peter (they say) departed thence, and returned back to Jerusalem, where he was present at that great apostolical synod, of which before.— After this we are left under great uncertainties how he disposed of himself for many years. Confident we may be that he was not idle, but spent his time sometimes in preaching in the eastern parts, and sometimes in other parts of the world; as in Africa, Sicily, Italy, and other places. And here it may not be amiss to insert a claim in behalf of our own country: Eusebius telling us (as Metaphrastes reports it) that Peter was not only in these western parts, but particularly that he was a long time in Britain, where he converted many nations to the faith. But we had better be without the honor of St. Peter's company, than build the story upon so sandy a foundation; Metaphrastes's authority being of so little value in this case, that it is slighted by the more learned and moderate writers of the church of Rome. But wherever it was that St. Peter employed his time, towards the latter part of Nero's reign he returned to Rome, where he found the minds of the people strangely bewitched and hardened against the embracing of the Christian religion, by the subtilties and magic arts of Simon Magus, whom (as we have before related) he had formerly baffled at Samaria. This Simon was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria, bred up in the arts of sorcery and divination; and, by the help of the diabolical powers, performed many strange feats of wonder and activity; insomuch that people generally looked upon him as some great deity come down from heaven. But being discovered and confounded by Peter at Samaria, he left the east, and fled to Rome; where, by witchcraft and sorceries, he insinuated himself into the favor of the people; and at last became very acceptable to the emperors themselves, insomuch that no honor and veneration was too great for him. Justin Martyr assures us, that he was honored as a deity, that a statue was erected to him in the Insula Tiberina, between two bridges, with this inscription:—"SIMONI DEO SANCTO;" "To Simon the holy god;" that the Samaritans generally, and very many of other nations, did own and worship him as the chief principal deity. I know the credit of this inscription is shrewdly shaken by some later antiquaries, who tell us, that the good father, being a Greek, might easily mistake in a Latin inscription, or be imposed upon by others; and the true inscription was SEMONI SANGO DEO FIDIO, &c., such an inscription being in the last age dug up in the Tiberine island, and there preserved to this day. It is not impossible but this might be the foundation of the story. But sure I am, that it is not

only reported by the martyr, who was himself a Samaritan, and lived but in the next age, but by others almost of the same time; Irenæus, Tertullian, and by others after them. It further deserves to be considered, that Justin Martyr was a person of great learning and gravity, inquisitive about matters of this nature, at this time at Rome, where he was capable fully to satisfy himself in the truth of things; that he presented this apology to the emperor and the senate of Rome, to whom he would be careful what he said; and who, as they knew whether it was true or no, so, if false, could not but ill resent to be so boldly imposed upon by so notorious a fable. But be it as it will, he was highly in favor both with the people and their emperors; especially Nero, who was the great patron of magicians, and all who maintained secret ways of commerce with the infernal powers. With him St. Peter thought fit in the first place to encounter and to undeceive the people, by discovering the impostures and delusions of that wretched man.

4. That he did so, is generally affirmed by the ancient fathers; who tell us of some particular instances wherein he baffled and confounded him. But because the matter is more entirely drawn up by Hegesippus the younger, an author contemporary with St. Ambrose, if not (which is most probable) St. Ambrose himself, we shall from him represent the summary of the story. There was at this time at Rome an eminent young gentleman, and a kinsman of the emperor's, lately dead. The fame which Peter had for raising persons to life, persuaded his friends that he might be called. Others also prevailing that Simon the magician might be sent for. Simon glad of the occasion to magnify himself before the people, propounded to Peter, that if he raised the gentleman unto life, then Peter, who had so injuriously provoked the great power of God, (as he styled himself) should lose his life: but if Peter prevailed, he himself would submit to the same fate and sentence.—Peter accepted the terms, and Simon began his charms and enchantments, whereat the dead gentleman seemed to move his hand. The people that stood by presently cried out that he was alive, and that he talked with Simon; and began to fall foul upon Peter, for daring to oppose himself against so great a power. The apostle entreated their patience, told them that all this was but a phantasm and appearance; that if Simon was but taken from the bed-side, all this pageantry would quickly vanish. Who being accordingly removed, the body remained without the least sign of motion. Peter, standing at a good distance from the bed, silently made his address to heaven, and then before them all commanded the young gentleman in the name of the Lord Jesus to arise; who immediately did so, spoke, walked, and eat, and was by Peter restored to his mother. The people who saw this, suddenly changed their opinions, and fell upon the magician with an intent to stone him. But Peter begged his life, and told him, that it would be a sufficient punishment to him to live and see, that in despite of all his power and magic, the kingdom of Christ should increase and flourish. The magician was inwardly tormented with this defeat, and vexed to see the triumph of the apostles; and therefore mustering up all his

powers, summoned the people, told them he was offended at the Galileans, whose protector and guardian he had been; and therefore set them a day, when he promised that they should see him fly up into heaven.* At the time appointed, he went up into the mount of the capitol, and throwing himself from the top of the rock, began his flight. A sight which the people entertained with great wonder and veneration, affirming that this must be the power of God, and not of man. Peter standing in the crowd, prayed to our Lord that the people might be undeceived; and that the vanity of the impostor might be discovered in such a way that he himself might be sensible of it. Immediately the wings which he had made himself began to fail him, and he fell to the ground, miserably bruised and wounded with the fall: whence being carried into a neighboring village, he soon after died. This is the story; for the particular circumstances whereof the reader must rely upon the credit of my author, the thing in general being sufficiently acknowledged by most ancient writers. This contest of Peter's with Simon Magus is placed by Eusebius under the reign of Claudius; but by the generality both of ancient and later authors, it is referred to the reign of Nero.†

5. Such was the end of this miserable and unhappy man; which no sooner came to the ears of the emperor, to whom by wicked artifices he had endeared himself, but it became an occasion of hastening Peter's ruin. The emperor probably had been before displeased with Peter, not only upon the account of the general disagreement, and inconformity of his religion, but because he had so strictly pressed temperance and chastity, and reclaimed so many women in Rome from a dissolute and vicious life; thereby crossing that wanton and lascivious temper to which that prince was so immoderate a slave and vassal. And being now by this means robbed of his dear favorite and companion, he resolved upon revenge; and commanded Peter (as also St. Paul, who was at this time at Rome) to be apprehended and cast into the Mamertine prison: where they spent their time in the exercises of religion, and especially in preaching to the prisoners, and those who resorted to them. And here we may suppose it was (if not a little before) that Peter wrote his second epistle to the dispersed Jews, wherein he endeavors to confirm them in the belief and

* Sulpicius, an author who wrote at the beginning of the fifth century, states the tradition at full, as a matter of history; and says that Simon, in attempting to fly, supported by two demons, was cast down by the united prayers of Peter and Paul. The same tradition respecting his flying is also reported by other authors, particularly by Isidore, bishop of Seville, in the sixth century.—En.

† The character of Simon, as recorded in the Acts, and the known inclination of the people in this age for magical arts, would be sufficient to give a high degree of probability to this tradition. Many instances of daring confidence in occult science are on record which admit of no doubt, and the apparent infatuation, therefore, of Simon and his deluded admirers may be matter of surprise rather than of incredulity. Satan, moreover, no doubt employed him as one of his agents in the struggle in which he was engaged.—En.

practice of Christianity, and to fortify them against those poisonous and pernicious principles and practices, which even then began to break in upon the Christian church.

6. Nero returning from Achaia, and entering Rome with a great deal of pomp and triumph, resolved now the apostle should fall as a victim and sacrifice to his cruelty and revenge. While the fatal stroke was daily expected, the Christians in Rome did, by daily prayers and importunities, solicit St. Peter to make an escape, and to reserve himself to the uses and services of the church. This at first he rejected, as what would ill reflect upon his courage and constancy, and argue him to be afraid of those sufferings for Christ to which he himself had so often persuaded others; but the prayers and tears of the people overcame him, and made him yield. Accordingly the next night, having prayed with, and taken his farewell of the brethren, he got over the prison wall; and coming to the city gate, he is there said to have met with our Lord, who was just entering into the city. Peter asked him, "Lord, whither art thou going?" From whom he presently received this answer: "I am come to Rome, to be crucified a second time." By which answer Peter apprehended himself to be reproved, and that our Lord meant it of his death, that he was to be crucified in his servant. Whereupon he went back to the prison, and delivered himself into the hands of his keepers, showing himself most ready and cheerful to acquiesce in the will of God. And we are told, that in the stone whereon our Lord stood while he talked with Peter, he left the impression of his feet; which stone has been ever since preserved as a very sacred relic, and after several translations was at length fixed in the church of St. Sebastian the martyr, where it is kept and visited with great expressions of reverence and devotion at this day. Before his suffering he was, no question, scourged; according to the manner of the Romans, who were wont first to whip those malefactors who were adjudged to the most severe and capital punishments. Having saluted his brethren, and especially having taken his last farewell of St. Paul, he was brought out of the prison, and led to the top of the Vatican Mount, near to Tiber, the place designed for his execution. The death he was adjudged to was crucifixion; as of all others accounted the most shameful, so the most severe and terrible. But he entreated the favor of the officers, that he might not be crucified in the ordinary way,* but might suffer with his head downwards, and his feet up to heaven; affirming that he was unwor-

thy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him. Happy man (as Chrysostom glosses) to be set in the readiest posture of travelling from earth to heaven. His body being taken from the cross, is said to have been embalmed by Marcellinus the presbyter, after the Jewish manner, and was then buried in the Vatican, near the triumphal way. Over his grave a small church was soon after erected; which being destroyed by Heliogabalus, his body was removed to the cemetery in the Appian-way, two miles from Rome; where it remained till the time of pope Cornelius, who reconveyed it to the Vatican, where it rested somewhat obscurely till the reign of Constantine; who, out of the mighty reverence which he had for the Christian religion, caused many churches to be built at Rome, but especially rebuilt and enlarged the Vatican to the honor of St. Peter. In the doing whereof himself is said to have been the first that began to dig the foundation, and to have carried thence twelve baskets of rubbish with his own hands; in honor, as it should seem, of the twelve apostles. He infinitely enriched the church with gifts and ornaments, which in every age increased in splendor and riches, till it is become one of the wonders of the world at this day; of whose glories, stateliness, and beauty, and those many venerable monuments of antiquity that are in it, they who desire to know more, may be plentifully satisfied by Onuphrius. Only one amongst the rest must not be forgotten; there being kept that very wooden chair wherein St. Peter sat when he was at Rome, by the only touching whereof many miracles are said to be performed. But surely Baronius's wisdom and gravity were from home, when speaking of this chair; and fearing that heretics would imagine that it might be rotten in so long a time, he tells us, that it is no wonder that this chair should be preserved so long, when Eusebius affirms, that the wooden chair of St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, was extant in the time of Constantine.* But the cardinal, it seems, forgot to consider, that there is some difference between three and sixteen hundred years. But of this enough. St. Peter was crucified, according to the common computation, in the year of Christ 69,† and the thirteenth (or, as Eusebius, the fourteenth) of Nero; how truly may be inquired afterwards.

SECTION X.

The character of his Person and Temper; and an account of his Writings.

HAVING run through the current history of St. Peter's life, it may not be amiss in the next place to survey a little his person and temper. His body (if we may believe the description given of him by Nicephorus‡) was somewhat slender, of a middle size, but rather inclining to tallness: his complexion very pale, and almost white; the hair

* Orig. lib. iii. in Genes. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. l. p. 71. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Petr. p. 262. Heges. p. 279.

Prima Petrum rapuit sententia legibus Neronis,
Pendere jussum præminente ligno.
Ille tamen veritus celsæ decus æmulando mortis
Ambire tanti gloriam Magistri:
Exigit ut pedibus mersum caput imprimant supinis,
Quospectet imum stipitem cerebro.
Figitur ergo manus subter, sola versus in cacumen
Hoc mente major, quo minor signa.
Moverat ex humili cælum citius solere adiri,
Dejecit ora, spiritum daturus.

Prudent. Peristeph. Hyron. xi. in pass. Pet. et Paul.

* Ad. An. 45, n. 11.

† Or the year 65, which is the date argued for by many eminent scholars.—Ed.

‡ Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 37. p. 195.

of his head and beard curled and thick, but withal short : though St. Jerome tells, out of Clemens's periods, that he was bald ; which probably might be in his declining age. His eyes black, but specked with red ; which Baronius will have to proceed from his frequent weeping : his eyebrows thin, or none at all ; his nose long, but rather broad and flat than sharp. Such was the case and outside. Let us next look inwards, and view the jewel that was within. Take him as a man, and there seems to have been a natural eagerness predominant in his temper, which as a whetstone sharpened his soul for all bold and generous undertakings. It was this, in a great measure, that made him so forward to speak, and to return answers, sometimes before he had well considered them. It was this made him expose his person to the most imminent dangers, promise those great things in behalf of his master, and resolutely draw his sword in his quarrel against a whole band of soldiers, and wound the high-priest's servant : and possibly he had attempted greater matters, had not our Lord restrained and taken him off by that seasonable check that he gave him.

2. This temper he owed in a great measure to the genius and nature of his country, of which Josephus gives this true character : That it naturally bred in men a certain fierceness and animosity, whereby they were fearlessly carried out upon any action, and in all things showed a great strength and courage both of mind and body. The Galileans (says he) being fighters from their childhood ; the men being as seldom overtaken with cowardice as their country with want of men. And yet, notwithstanding this, his fervor and fierceness had its intervals ; there being some times when the paroxysms of his heat and courage did intermit, and the man was surprised and betrayed by his own fears. Witness his passionate crying out when he was upon the sea, in danger of his life, and his fearful deserting his master in the garden ; but especially his carriage in the high-priest's hall, when the confident charge of a sorry maid made him sink so far beneath himself ; and, notwithstanding his great and resolute promises, so shamefully deny his master, and that with curses and imprecations. But he was in danger, and passion prevailed over his understanding, and fear betrayed the succors which reason offered ; and being intent upon nothing but the present safety of his life, he heeded not what he did, when he dowsned his master to save himself. So dangerous is it to be left to ourselves, and to have our natural passions let loose upon us.

3. Consider him as a disciple and a Christian, and we shall find him exemplary in the great instances of religion, singular in his humility and lowliness of mind. With what a passionate earnestness, upon the conviction of a miracle, did he beg of our Saviour to depart from him ; accounting himself not worthy that the Son of God should come near so vile a sinner ? When our Lord, by that wonderful condescension, stooped to wash his apostles' feet, he could by no means be persuaded to admit it ; not thinking it fit that so great a person should submit himself to so servile an office towards so mean a person as himself ; nor could he be induced to accept it, till our Lord

was in a manner forced to threaten him into obedience. When Cornelius, heightened in his apprehensions of him by an immediate command from God concerning him, would have entertained him with expressions of more than ordinary honor and veneration, so far was he from complying with it, that he plainly told him, he was no other than such a man as himself. With how much candor and modesty does he treat the inferior rulers and ministers of the church ! He, upon whom antiquity heaps so many honorable titles, styling himself no other than their fellow-presbyter. Admirable his love to, and zeal for his master, which he thought he could never express at too high a rate : for his sake venturing on the greatest dangers, and exposing himself to the most imminent hazards of life. It was in his quarrel that he drew his sword against a band of soldiers, and an armed multitude ; and it was love to his master that drew him into that imprudent advice, that he should seek to save himself, and avoid those sufferings that were coming upon him ; that made him promise and engage so deep to suffer and die with him. Great was his forwardness in owning Christ to be the Messiah and Son of God ; which drew from our Lord that honorable encomium, " Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah." But greater his courage and constancy in confessing Christ before his most inveterate enemies, especially after he had recovered himself of his fall. With how much plainness did he tell the Jews, at every turn, to their very faces, that they were the murderers and crucifiers of the Lord of glory ! Nay, with what an undaunted courage, with what an heroic greatness of mind did he tell that very Sanhedrim that had sentenced and condemned him, that they were guilty of his murder ; and that they could never be saved any other way than by this very Jesus whom they had crucified and put to death.

4. Lastly, let us reflect upon him as an apostle, as a pastor and guide of souls. And so we find him faithful and diligent in his office ; with an infinite zeal endeavoring to instruct the ignorant, reduce the erroneous, to strengthen the weak, and confirm the strong, to reclaim the vicious, and " turn souls to righteousness." We find him taking all opportunities of preaching to the people, converting many thousands at once. How many voyages and travels did he undergo ? With how unconquerable a patience did he endure all conflicts and trials, and surmount all difficulties and oppositions, that he might plant and propagate the Christian faith ; not thinking much to lay down his own life to promote and further it ! Nor did he only do his duty himself, but as one of the prime superintendents of the church, and as one that was sensible of the value and worth of souls, he was careful to put others in mind of theirs ; earnestly pressing and persuading the pastors and governors of it, " to feed the flock of God ; * to take upon them the rule and inspection of it," " freely and willingly ;" not out of a sinister end, merely, of gaining advantages to themselves, but out of a sincere design of doing good to souls ; that they would treat them mildly and gently, and be themselves examples of piety and religion to

them, as the best way to make their ministry successful and effectual. And because he could not be always present to teach and warn men, he ceased not by letters "to stir up their minds" to the remembrance and practice of what they had been taught. A course, he tells them, which he was resolved to hold as long as he lived; as "thinking it meet while he was in this tabernacle to stir them up, by putting them in mind of these things;"* that so they might be able after his decrease to have them always in remembrance. And this may lead us to the consideration of those writings which he left behind him for the benefit of the church.

5. Now the writings that entitle themselves to this apostle, were either genuine or supposititious. The genuine writings are his two epistles, which make up part of the sacred canon. For the first of them, no certain account can be had when it was written: though Baronius and most writers commonly assign it to the year of Christ 44.† But this cannot be, Peter not being at Rome, (from whence it is supposed to have been written) at that time, as we shall see anon. He wrote it to the Jewish converts dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, and the countries thereabouts, chiefly upon the occasion of that persecution which had been raised at Jerusalem. And, accordingly, the main design of it is, to confirm and comfort them under their present sufferings and persecutions, and to direct and instruct them how to carry themselves in the several states and relations, both of the civil and the Christian life. For the place whence it was written, it is expressly dated from Babylon: but what or where this Babylon is, is not so easy to determine. Some think it was Babylon in Egypt, and probably Alexandria; and that there Peter preached the gospel. Others will have it to have been Babylon the ancient metropolis of Assyria, and where great numbers of Jews dwelt ever since the times of their captivity. But we need not send Peter on so long an errand, if we embrace the notion of a learned man, who by Babylon will figuratively understand Jerusalem; no longer now the holy city, but a kind of spiritual Babylon, in which the church of God did at this time groan under great servitude and captivity. And this notion of the word he endeavors to make good, by calling in to his assistance two of the ancient fathers, who so understand that of the prophet, "We have healed Babylon, but she was not healed." Where the prophet, say they, by Babylon means Jerusalem, as differing nothing from the wickedness of the nations, nor conforming itself to the law of God. But generally the writers of the Romish church, and the more moderate of the reformed party, acquiescing herein in the judgment of antiquity, by Babylon understand Rome. And so it is plain St. John calls it in his "Revelation,"‡ either from its conformity in power and greatness

to that ancient city, or from that great idolatry which at this time reigned in Rome. And so we may suppose St. Peter to have written it from Rome, not long after his coming thither, though the precise time be not exactly known.

6. As for the second epistle, it was not accounted of old of equal value and authority with the first; and, therefore, for some ages, not taken into the sacred canon, as is expressly affirmed by Eusebius, and many of the ancients before him. The ancient Syriac church did not receive it; and accordingly it is not to be found in their ancient copies of the New Testament. Yea, those of that church at this day do not own it as canonical, but only read it privately, as we do the apocryphal books. The greatest exception that I can find against it, is the difference of its style from the other epistle; whence it was presumed, that they were not both written by the same hand. But St. Jerome, who tells us the objection, does elsewhere himself return the answer, that the difference in the style and manner of writing might very well arise from hence, that St. Peter, according to his different circumstances, and the necessity of affairs, was forced to use several emanuenses and interpreters; sometimes St. Mark, and after his departure some other person, which might justly occasion a difference in the style and character of these epistles. Not to say, that the same person may vastly alter and vary his style, according to the times when, or the persons to whom, or the subjects about which he writes, or the temper and disposition he is in at the time of writing, or the care that is used in doing it. Who sees not the vast difference of Jeremiah's writing in his prophecy, and in his book of Lamentations? between St. John's, in his Gospel, his Epistles, and Apocalypse? How oft does St. Paul alter his style in several of his epistles; in some more lofty and elegant; in others more rough and harsh? Besides hundreds of instances that might be given, both in ecclesiastical and foreign writers, too obvious to insist on in this place. The learned Grotius will have this epistle to have been written by Symeon, St. James's immediate successor in the bishopric of Jerusalem, and that the word (Peter) was inserted into the title by another hand. But, as a judicious person of our own observes, these were but his posthumous annotations, published by others, and no doubt never intended as the deliberate result of that great man's judgment; especially since he himself tacitly acknowledges, that all copies extant at this day read the title and inscription as it is in our books. And, indeed, there is a concurrence of circumstances to prove St. Peter to be the author of it. It bears his name in the front and title, yea, somewhat more expressly than the former, which has only one; this both his names. There is a passage in it which cannot well relate to any but him: when he tells us he was present with Christ in the holy mount; when he "received from God the Father honor and glory:" where he "heard the voice which came from heaven, from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* This evidently refers to Christ's transfiguration,

* 2 Pet. i. 12, 13, 15.

† Most later critics have assigned the year 61 as the more probable date of this epistle. Baronius seems to have been led into the error of giving it so early a date by his desire to strengthen his general argument respecting the apostle's residence at Rome.—Ed.

‡ Chap. xviii. 2, 10, 21.

* 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18.

where none were present but Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, neither of which was ever thought to be the author of this epistle. Besides that there is an admirable consent and agreement in many passages between these two epistles, as it were easy to show in particular instances. Add to this, that St. Jude, speaking of the "scoffers" who should come "in the last time, walking after their own ungodly lusts,"* cites this as that which had been "before spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;" wherein he plainly quotes the words of this second epistle of Peter, affirming, that "there should come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts."† And that this does agree to Peter, will further appear by this, that he tells us of these scoffers that should come in the last days; that is, before the destruction of Jerusalem; (as that phrase is often used in the New Testament;) that they should say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" Which clearly respects their making light of those threatenings of our Lord, whereby he had foretold that he would shortly come in judgment for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. This he now puts them in mind of, as what probably he had before told them of *vivâ voce*, when he was amongst them: for so we find he did elsewhere. Lactantius assuring us, "That amongst many strange and wonderful things which Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and left upon record, this was one: that within a short time God would send a prince who should destroy the Jews, and lay their cities level with the ground, straitly besiege them, destroy them with famine, so that they should feed upon one another: that their wives and daughters should be ravished, and their children's brains dashed out before their faces: that all things should be laid waste by fire and sword, and themselves perpetually banished from their own country; and this for their insolent and merciless usage of the innocent and dear Son of God." All which, as he observes, came to pass soon after their death, when Vespasian came upon the Jews, and extinguished both their name and nation. And what Peter here foretold at Rome, we need not question but he had done before to those Jews to whom he wrote this epistle. Wherein he especially antidotes them against those corrupt and poisonous principles, wherewith many, and especially the followers of Simon Magus, began to infect the church of Christ. And this but a little time before his death, as appears from that passage in it, where he tells them, "That he knew he must shortly put off his earthly tabernacle."‡

7. Besides these divine epistles, there were other supposititious writings which, in the first ages were fathered upon St. Peter. Such was the book called his Acts, mentioned by Origen, Eusebius, and

others; but rejected by them. Such was his gospel, which probably at first was nothing else but the gospel written by St. Mark, dictated to him (as is generally thought) by St. Peter; and therefore, as St. Jerome tells us, said to be his. Though in the next age there appeared a book under that title, mentioned by Serapion, bishop of Antioch, and by him at first suffered to be read in the church; but afterwards, upon a more careful perusal of it, he rejected it as apocryphal, as it was by others after him. Another was the book styled his Preaching, mentioned and quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus, and by Origen, but not acknowledged by them to be genuine; nay, expressly said to have been forged by heretics, by an ancient author contemporary with St. Cyprian. The next was his Apocalypse, or Revelation; rejected, as Sozomen tells us, by the ancients as spurious, but yet read in some churches in Palestine in his time. The last was the book called his Judgment, which probably was the same with that called Hermes, or Pastor, a book of good use and esteem in the first times of Christianity, and which, as Eusebius tells us, was not only frequently cited by the ancients, but also publicly read in churches.

8. We shall conclude this section by considering Peter with respect to his several relations: that he was married is unquestionable, the sacred history mentioning his wife's mother: his wife (might we believe Metaphrastes) being the daughter of Aristobulus, brother to Barnabas the apostle. And though St. Jerome would persuade us that he left her behind him, together with his rets, when he forsook all to follow Christ; yet we know that father too well to be over-confident upon his word in a case of marriage or single life, wherein he is not over-scrupulous sometimes to strain a point to make his opinion more fair and plausible. The best is, we have an infallible authority which plainly intimates the contrary, the testimony of St. Paul, who tells us of Cephas, that "he led about a wife, a sister," along with him; who for the most part mutually cohabited and lived together, for aught that can be proved to the contrary. Clemens Alexandrinus gives us this account, though he tells us not the time or place; that Peter, seeing his wife going towards martyrdom, exceedingly rejoiced that she was called to so great an honor, and that she was now returning home; encouraging and earnestly exhorting her, and calling her by her name, bade her be mindful of our Lord. Such, says he, was the wedlock or that blessed couple, and the perfect disposition and agreement in those things that were dearest to them. By her he is said to have had a daughter, called Petronilla, (Metaphrastes* adds a son,) how truly I know not. This only is certain that Clemens of Alexandria, reckons Peter for one of the apostles that was married and had children. And surely he who was so good a man, and so good an apostle, was as good in the relation both of an husband and a father.

* Jude 17, 18.

† 2 Pet. iii. 2, 3.

‡ The caution with which St. Peter's Second Epistle was received into the sacred canon, affords a most valuable proof of the care employed by the church in the examination of writings purporting to be inspired. It was not probable that the genuineness and authenticity of the apostle's epistles could be every where known at the same period.—*Ed.*

* Metaphrastes was one of the principal Greek writers of the age in which he lived, but his Lives of the Saints are too filled with fable to possess any authority with ecclesiastical historians.

SECTION XI.

An Inquiry into St. Peter's going to Rome.

IT is not my purpose to swim against the stream and current of antiquity, in denying St. Peter to have been at Rome; an assertion easier perplexed and entangled than confuted and disproved: we may grant the main, without doing any great service to that church; there being evidence enough to every impartial and considering man, to spoil that smooth and plausible scheme of times, which Baronius and the writers of that church have drawn with so much care and diligence.—And in order to this we shall first inquire, whether that account which Bellarmine and Baronius give us of Peter's being at Rome, be tolerably reconcilable with the history of the apostles' acts, recorded by St. Luke; which will be best done by briefly presenting St. Peter's acts in their just series and order of time, and then see what countenance and foundation their account can receive from hence.*

2. After our Lord's ascension, we find Peter, for the first year at least, staying with the rest of the apostles at Jerusalem. In the next year he was sent, together with St. John, by the command of the apostles, to Samaria, to preach the gospel to that city, and the parts about it. About three years after, St. Paul meets him at Jerusalem, with whom he staid some time. In the two following years he visited the late planted churches, preached at Lydda and Joppa, where having "tarried many days," he thence removed to Casarea, where he preached to, and baptized Cornelius and his family. Whence, after some time, he returned to Jerusalem, where he probably staid, till cast into prison by Herod, and delivered by the angel. After which we hear no more of him, till three or four years after we find him in the council at Jerusalem. After which he had the contest with St. Paul at Antioch. And thence forward the sacred story is altogether silent in this matter.—So that in all this time we find not the least footstep of any intimation that he went to Rome.—This Baronius† well foresaw; and therefore once and again inserts this caution, that St. Luke did not design to record all the apostles' acts, and that he has omitted many things which were done by Peter: which surely no man ever intended to deny. But then, that he should omit a matter of such vast moment and importance to the whole

Christian world; that not one syllable should be said of a church planted by Peter at Rome; a church that was to be paramount, the seat of all spiritual power and infallibility, and to which all other churches were to veil and do homage; nay, that he should not so much as mention that ever he was there, and yet all this said to be done within the time he designed to write of, is by no means reasonable to suppose. Especially considering that St. Luke records many of his journeys and travels, and his preaching at several places, of far less consequence and concernment. Nor let this be thought the worse of, because a negative argument, since it carries so much rational evidence along with it, that any man who is not plainly biassed by interest will be satisfied with it.

3. But let us proceed a little further to inquire, whether we can meet any probable footsteps afterwards. About the year 53, towards the end of Claudius's reign, St. Paul is thought to have writ his epistle to the church of Rome, wherein he spends the greatest part of one chapter in saluting particular persons that were there; amongst whom it might reasonably have been expected, that St. Peter should have had the first place.—And supposing with Baronius,* that Peter at this time might be absent from the city, preaching the gospel in some parts of the west, yet we are not sure that St. Paul knew of this; and if he did, it is strange that in so large an epistle, wherein he had occasion enough, there should be neither direct nor indirect mention of him, or of any church there founded by him. Nay, St. Paul himself intimates, what an earnest desire he had to come thither, that he might "impart unto them some spiritual gifts, to the end they might be established in the faith;"‡ for which there could have been no such apparent cause, had Peter been there so lately and so long before him. Well, St. Paul himself, not many years after, is sent to Rome, ann. Chr. 56, or as Eusebius, 57; (though Baronius makes it two years after;) about the second year of Nero: when he comes thither, does he go to sojourn with Peter, as it is likely he would, had he been there? No, but dwelt by himself in his own hired house. No sooner was he come, but he called the chief of the Jews together, acquainted them with the cause and end of his coming, explains the doctrine of Christianity; which when they rejected, he tells them, that "henceforth the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles," who would hear it, to whom he would now address himself.† Which seems to intimate, that however some few of the Gentiles might have been brought over, yet that no such harvest had been made before his coming, as might reasonably have been expected from St. Peter's having been so many years amongst them. Within the two first years after St. Paul's coming to Rome, he wrote epistles to several churches, to the Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and one to Philemon; in none whereof is there the least mention of St. Peter, or from whence the least probability can be derived that he had been there. In that to the Colossians, he tells them, that of the Jews at Rome he had had

* The united learning, candor, and honesty of our author are here conspicuously displayed: few passages in history are more strongly confirmed than that which relates the apostle's residence at Rome. In the summary of the opposite arguments, given by Basnage, Liv. vii. c. 3, (*Histoire de l'Eglise*;) this must be apparent to every candid inquirer; and in all subjects of this kind, it should always be observed as a principle, that no circumstance in history can by any possibility be rendered doubtful by the disputed inferences drawn therefrom. However erroneous the use made of facts, never let the facts on that account be disallowed. The Roman Catholic writers, however, have endangered the apparent truth of history, by forcing what is supported on sufficient evidence into assertions to which the historical evidence does not extend.—Ed.

† Ad. Ann. 39, num. 12, ad. Ann. 34, num. 285.

* Ad. Ann. 58, n. 51.

† Rom. i. 10, 11, 12.

‡ Acts xxviii. 17.

"no other fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which had been a comfort unto him, save only Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus, who was called Justus;"* which evidently excludes St. Peter. And in that to Timothy, which Baronius confesses to have been written a little before his martyrdom, (though probably it was written at the same time with the rest above mentioned,) he tells him, that "at his first answer at Rome, no man stood with him, but that all men forsook him;"† which we can hardly believe St. Peter would have done, had he then been there. He further tells him, that "only Luke was with him;" that Crescens was gone to this place, Titus to that, and Tychicus left at another. Strange, that if Peter was at this time gone from Rome, St. Paul should take no notice of it as well as the rest! Was he so inconsiderable a person as not to be worth the remembering? or his errand of so small importance as not to deserve a place in St. Paul's account, as well as that of Crescens to Galatia, or of Titus to Dalmatia? Surely the true reason was, that St. Peter as yet had not been at Rome, and so there could be no foundation for it.

4. It were no hard matter further to demonstrate the inconsistency of that account which Bellarmine and Baronius give us, of Peter's being at Rome from the time of the apostolical synod at Jerusalem. For if St. Paul went up to that council fourteen years after his own conversion, as he plainly intimates,‡ and that he himself was converted in the year 35, somewhat less than two years after the death of Christ, then it plainly appears that this council was holden in the year 48, in the sixth year of Claudius, if not somewhat sooner; for St. Paul's *δια δεκαετασσαν ετων* does not necessarily imply that fourteen years were completely past; *δια* signifying *circa*, as well as *post*; but that it was near about that time. This being granted, (and if it be not, it is easy to make it good) then three things amongst others will follow from it. First, that whereas, according to Bellarmine and Baronius, St. Peter after his first coming to Rome, (which they place in the year 44, and the second of Claudius,) was seven years before he returned thence to the council at Jerusalem; they are strangely out in their story, there being but three, or at most four years between his going thither and the celebration of that council. Secondly; that when they tell us, that St. Peter's leaving Rome to come to the council, was upon the occasion of the decree of Claudius, banishing all Jews out of the city, this can no ways be; for Orosius does not only affirm but prove it from Josephus, that Claudius's decree was published in the ninth year of his reign, or anno Chr. 51; three years at least after the celebration of the council. Thirdly; that when Baronius tells us,|| that the reason why Peter went to Rome after the breaking up of the synod, was because Claudius was now dead, he not daring to go before for fear of the decree; this can be no reason at all, the council being ended at least three years before that decree took place; so that he might safely have gone thither without the least danger from it. It might further be showed (if it were necessary)

that the account which even they themselves give us is not very consistent with itself. So fatally does a bad cause draw men, whether they will or no, into errors and mistakes.

5. The truth is, the learned men of that church are not well agreed among themselves, to give in their verdict in this case. And indeed how should they, when the thing itself affords no solid foundation for it? Onuphrius, a man of great learning and industry in all matters of antiquity, and who (as the writer of Baronius's life informs us) designed before Baronius to write the history of the church, goes away by himself, in assigning the time of St. Peter's founding his see both at Antioch and Rome. For finding, by the account of the sacred story, that Peter did not leave Judæa for the first ten years after our Lord's ascension, and consequently could not in that time erect his see at Antioch, he affirms that he went first to Rome, whence returning to the council at Jerusalem, he thence went to Antioch, where he remained seven years, till the death of Claudius; and having spent almost the whole reign of Nero in several parts of Europe, returned in the last of Nero's reign to Rome, and there died. An opinion for which he is sufficiently chastised by Baronius and others of that party. And here I cannot but remark the ingenuity (for the learning sufficiently commends itself) of Monsieur Valois, who freely confesses the mistake of Baronius, Petavius, &c. in making Peter go to Rome in the year 44, the second year of Claudius, whereas it is plain, says he, from the history of the Acts, that Peter went not out of Judæa and Syria, till the death of Herod, the fourth of Claudius, two whole years after. Consonant to which, as he observes, is what Apollonius, a writer of the second century, reports from a tradition current in his time, that the apostles did not depart asunder till the twelfth year after Christ's ascension, our Lord himself having so commanded them. In confirmation whereof, let me add a passage that I meet with in Clemens of Alexandria, where from St. Peter he records this speech of our Saviour to his apostles, spoken, probably either a little before his death or after his resurrection: "If any Israelite shall repent, and believe in God through my name, his sins shall be forgiven him after twelve years. Go ye into the world, lest any should say, We have not heard." This passage, as ordinarily pointed in all editions that I have seen, is scarce capable of any tolerable sense; for what is the meaning of a penitent Israelite's being pardoned "after twelve years?" It is therefore probable, yea, certain with me, that the stop ought to be after *αμαρτιας*, and *μετα δωδεκα ετη* joined to the following clause, and then the sense will run clear and smooth: "If any Jew shall repent and believe the gospel, he shall be pardoned: but after twelve years, go ye into all the world; that none may pretend that they have not heard the sound of the gospel." The apostles were first to preach the gospel to the Jews for some considerable time, twelve years after Christ's ascension, in and about Judæa, and then to betake themselves to the provinces of the Gentile world, to make known to them the glad tidings of salvation; exactly answerable to the tradition mentioned by Apollonius. Besides, the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* tells

* Acts iv. 10, 11.

† 1 Tim. iv. 16.

‡ Gal. ii. 1.

|| Ad. Ann. 58, n. 51.

us, that Peter came not to Rome till the seventh year of Claudius, anno Christi, 49. So little certainty can there be of any matter wherein there is no truth. Nay, the same excellent man, before mentioned, does not stick elsewhere to profess, he wonders at Baronius, that he should make Peter come from Rome, banished thence by Claudius's edict, to the synod at Jerusalem the same year, viz. the ninth of Claudius; a thing absolutely inconsistent with that story of the apostle's acts recorded by St. Luke, wherein there is the space of no less than three years, from the time of that synod to the decree of Claudius. It being evident, what he observes, that after the celebration of the council, St. Paul went back to Antioch; afterwards into Syria and Cilicia, to preach the gospel; thence into Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; from whence he went into Macedonia, and first preached at Philippi, then at Thessalonica and Berea, afterwards stayed some considerable time at Athens, and last of all went to Corinth, where he met with Aquila and Priscilla, lately come from Italy, banished Rome, with the rest of the Jews, by the decree of Claudius; all which, by an easy and reasonable computation, can make up no less than three years at least.

6. That which caused Baronius to split upon so many rocks, was not so much want of seeing them, which a man of his parts and industry could not but in a great measure see, as the unhappy necessity of defending those unsound principles which he had undertaken to maintain. For being to make good Peter's five-and-twenty year's presidency over the church of Rome, he was forced to confound times, and dislocate stories, that he might bring all his ends together. What foundation this story of Peter's being five-and-twenty years bishop of Rome has in antiquity, I find not; unless it sprang from hence, that Eusebius places Peter's coming to Rome in the second year of Claudius, and his martyrdom in the fourteenth of Nero; between which there is just the space of five-and-twenty years; whence those that came after concluded that he sat bishop there all that time. It cannot be denied but that in St. Jerome's translation it is expressly said, that he continued five-and-twenty years bishop of that city: but then it is as evident that this was his own addition, who probably set things down as the report went in his time, no such thing being to be found in the Greek copy of Eusebius. Nor indeed does he ever there or elsewhere positively affirm St. Peter to have been bishop of Rome, but only that he preached the gospel there; and expressly affirms, that he and St. Paul being dead, Linus was the first bishop of Rome.* To which I may add, that when the ancients speak of the bishops of Rome, and the first originals of that church, they equally attribute the founding and the episcopacy and government of it to Peter and Paul, making the one

as much concerned in it as the other. Thus Epiphanius, reckoning up the bishops of that see, places Peter and Paul in the front, as the first bishops of Rome: "Peter and Paul, apostles, became the first bishops of Rome; then Linus," &c. And again, a little after: "The succession of the bishops of Rome was in this manner; Peter and Paul, Linus, Cletus," &c. And Hegesippus, speaking of their coming to Rome, equally says of them, that they were *Doctores Christianorum, sublimis operibus, clari magisterio*: "The instructors of the Christians, admirable for miracles, and renowned for their authority." However, granting not only that he was there, but that he was bishop, and that for five-and-twenty years together, yet what would this make for the unlimited sovereignty and universality of that church, unless a better evidence than "feed my sheep" could be produced for its uncontrollable supremacy and dominion over the whole Christian world?

7. The sum is this: granting what none that has any reverence for antiquity will deny, that St. Peter was at Rome; he probably came thither some few years before his death, joined with and assisted St. Paul in preaching of the gospel, and then both sealed the testimony of it with their blood. The date of his death is differently assigned by the ancients. Eusebius places it in the year 69, in the fourteenth of Nero; Epiphanius in the twelfth. That which seems to me most probable is, that it was in the tenth, or the year 65; which I thus compute. Nero's burning of Rome is placed by Tacitus, under the consulship of C. Lecanius and M. Licinius, about the month of July, that is, anno Chr. 64. This act procured him the infinite hatred and clamours of the people, which having in vain endeavored several ways to remove and pacify, he at last resolved upon this project, to drive the odium upon the Christians; whom therefore, both to appease the gods and please the people, he condemned as guilty of the fact, and caused to be executed with all manner of acute and exquisite tortures. This persecution we may suppose began about the end of that, or the beginning of the following year.—And under this persecution, I doubt not, it was that St. Peter suffered, and changed earth for heaven.

AN APPENDIX

TO THE PRECEDING SECTION,

Containing a vindication of St. Peter's being at Rome.

FINDING the truth of what is supposed and granted in the foregoing section, to wit, St. Peter's going to and suffering at Rome, not only doubted of heretofore in the beginning of the Reformation, while the paths of antiquity were less frequented

* Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. 2, p. 71.

The words of Eusebius are, that Clemens was the third among the bishops from Peter and Paul—Linus having been the first, and Anencletus the second. On this passage the learned editor, Valesius observes, that it is not to be supposed that Paul was more honorable than Peter because named first; that in the seals of the Roman church he was

placed on the right hand, and Peter on the left; and that though Eusebius indeed does not here number the apostles in the order of bishops, he, in his Chronicon, ascribes the Roman episcopacy to Peter alone.

and beaten out; but now again, lately, in this broad day-light of ecclesiastical knowledge, not only called in question, but exploded as most vain and fabulous, and that especially by a foreign professor of name and note,* it may not be amiss, having the opportunity of this impression, to make some few remarks for the better clearing of this matter.

2. And first, I observe that this matter of fact is attested by witnesses of the most remote antiquity, persons of great eminency and authority, and who lived near enough to those times to know the truth and certainty of those things which they reported. And perhaps there is scarce any one piece of ancient church history for which there is more clear, full, and constant evidence, than there is for this. Not to insist on that passage of Ignatius, in his epistle to the Romans, which seems yet to look this way, it is expressly asserted by Papias, bishop of Hierapolis or Phrygia, who (as Irenæus tells us) was scholar to St. John, and fellow-pupil with St. Polycarp; and though we should, with Eusebius, suppose it was not St. John the apostle, whose scholar he was, but another surnamed the Elder, that lived at Ephesus, yet will this set him very little lower in point of time. Now, Papias says not only that St. Peter was at Rome, and preached the Christian faith there, but that he wrote thence his first epistle, and by his authority confirmed the gospel, which St. Mark, his disciple and follower, at the request of the Romans, had drawn up. And that we may see that he did not carelessly take up these things as common hearsays, it was his custom, wherever he met with any that had conversed with the apostles, to pick up what memoirs he could meet with concerning them; and particularly to inquire what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas or James, or the rest of the disciples of our Lord, had either said or done. Which sufficiently shows what care he took to derive the most accurate notices of these matters.

3. Next Papias comes Irenæus, a man, as St. Jerome styles him, of the apostolic times; and was, he tells us, Papias's own scholar; however, it is certain, from his own account that he was disciple to St. Polycarp, a man famous for his learning, gravity, and piety, throughout the whole Christian world. About the year 179 he was made bishop of the metropolitan church of Lyons, in France; a little before which he had been despatched upon a message to Rome, and had conversed with the great men there. Now, his testimony in this case is uncontrollable; for he says, that Peter and Paul preached the gospel at Rome, and founded a church there; and elsewhere, that the great and most ancient church of Rome was founded and constituted by the two glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; and that these blessed apostles, having founded this church, delivered the episcopal care of it over unto Linus. Contemporary

with Irenæus, or rather a little before him, was Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, a man of singular eminency and authority in those times; who, in an epistle which he wrote to the church of Rome, compares the plantation of Christianity which Peter and Paul had made both at Rome and Corinth; and says further, that after they had sown the seeds of the evangelical doctrine at Corinth, they went together into Italy, where they taught the faith, and suffered martyrdom.

4. Towards the latter end of the second century flourished Clemens of Alexandria, presbyter of that church, and regent of the catechetical school there, who in his book of Institutions, gives the very same testimony which we quoted from Papias before; they being both brought in by Eusebius as joint evidence in this matter. Tertullian, who lived much about the same time at Carthage, that Clemens did at Alexandria, and had been, as is probable, more than once at Rome, affirms most expressly, more than once and again, that the church of Rome was happy in having its doctrine sealed with apostolic blood; and that Peter was crucified in that place, or, as he expresses it, *passioni Dominicæ adequatus*; that Peter baptized in Tiber, as John the Baptist had done in Jordan and elsewhere; that when Nero first dyed the yet tender faith of Rome with the blood of its professors, then it was that Peter was girt by another, and bound to the cross.

5. Next to Tertullian succeeds Caius, an ecclesiastical person, as Eusebius calls him, flourishing in the year 204, in the time of pope Zephyrin; who, in a book which he wrote against Proclus, one of the heads of the Cataphrygian sect, speaking concerning the places where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul were buried, has these words: "I am able to show the very tombs of the apostles, for whether you go into the Vatican or into the Via Ostiensis, you will meet with the sepulchres of those that founded that church," meaning the church of Rome. The last witness whom I shall produce in this case is Origen, a man justly revered for his great learning and piety; and who took a journey to Rome while pope Zephyrin yet lived, on purpose, as himself tells us, to behold that church so venerable for its antiquity; and therefore cannot but be supposed very inquisitive to satisfy himself in all, especially the ecclesiastical antiquities of that place. Now he expressly says of Peter, that after he had preached to the dispersed Jews of the eastern parts, he came at last to Rome, where, according to his own request, he was crucified with his head downwards. Lower than Origen I need not descend; it being granted by those who oppose this story, that in the time of Origen, the report of St. Peter's going to, and suffering martyrdom at Rome, was commonly received in the Christian church. And now I would fain know, what one passage of those ancient times can be proved either by more, or by more considerable evidence than this is: and, indeed, considering how small a portion of the writings of those first ages of the church have been transmitted to us, there is much greater cause rather to wonder that we should have so many witnesses in this case, than that we have no more.

6. Secondly; I observe that the arguments brought to shake the credit of this story, and the

* Spanheim, the author alluded to, is a writer of great learning and ability, but he expresses his opinions with the spirit of a controversialist; and not only disputes facts which contradict his views, but too frequently ascribes the actions and sentiments of those to whom he is opposed to false motives.—Ed.

exceptions made to these ancient testimonies, are very weak and trifling, and altogether unbecoming the learning and gravity of those that make them. For arguments against it, what can be more weak and inconcluding than to assert the fabulousness of this story, because no mention is made of it by St. Luke, in the apostolical history; no footsteps of it to be found in any of St. Paul's epistles written from Rome: as if he might not come thither time enough after the accounts of the sacred story do expire. That St. Peter was never at Rome, because Clemens Romanus says nothing of it in his epistle to the Corinthians, when yet he mentions St. Paul's coming to the bounds of the west; and what yet is more absurd, because no notice is taken of it by the Roman historians who wrote the acts of that age; especially Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio: as if these great writers had had nothing else to do but to fill their commentaries with accounts concerning Christians, whom it is plain they despised and scorned, and looked upon as a contemptible, execrable sort of men; and therefore very little beside the bare mention of them, and that too but rarely, is to be met with in any of their writings; much less can it be expected that they should give an account of the accidents and circumstances of particular Christians: besides that, this whole way of reasoning is negative, and purely depends upon the silence of some few authors, which can signify nothing where there is such a current and uncontrollable tradition, and so many positive authorities to the contrary. And yet these are the best, and almost only arguments that are offered in this matter.

7. And of no greater force or weight are the exceptions made to the testimonies of the ancients, which we have produced, as will appear by a summary enumeration of the most material of them. Against Papias's evidence, it is excepted, that he was as Eusebius characterizes him "a man of a very weak and undiscerning judgment," and that he derived several things strange and unheard of from mere tradition. But all this is said of him by Eusebius, only upon the account of some doctrinal principles and opinions, and some rash and absurd expositions of our Saviour's doctrine, carelessly taken up from others, and handed down without due examination; particularly his millenary of Chiliastic notions: but what is this to invalidate his testimony in the case before us, a matter of a quite different nature from those mentioned by Eusebius? May not a man be mistaken in abstruse speculations, and yet be fit enough to judge in ordinary cases? As if none but a man of acute parts and a subtle apprehension, one able to pierce into the reasons, consistency, and consequences of doctrinal conclusions, were capable to deliver down matters of fact, things fresh in memory, done within much less than a hundred years; in themselves highly probable, and wherein no interest could be served, either for him to deceive others, or for other to deceive him.

8. Against Irenæus it is put in bar, that he gave not this testimony till after his return from Rome; that is, about a hundred and forty years after St. Peter's first pretended coming thither; which is no great abatement in a testimony of so remote

antiquity, when they had so many evidences and opportunities of satisfying themselves in the truth of things, which to us are utterly lost. That before his time many frivolous traditions began to take place, and that he himself is sometimes mistaken; the proper inference from which, if pursued to its just issue, must be this, either that he is always mistaken, or at least that he is so in this.

9. The authority of Dionysius of Corinth is thrown off with this, that it is of no greater value than that of Irenæus: that churches then began to emulate each other, by pretending to be of apostolical foundation; and that Dionysius herein consulted the honor of his own church, by deriving upon it the authority of those two great apostles Peter and Paul; and in that respect setting it on the same level with Rome: which yet is a mere suggestion of his own, and so far as it respects Dionysius, is said without any just warrant from antiquity. Besides, his testimony itself is called in question, for affirming that Peter and Paul went together from Corinth into Italy, and there taught and suffered martyrdom at the same time. Against their coming together to Corinth, and thence passing into Italy, nothing is brought; but that the account St. Luke gives of the travels and preachings of these apostles is not consistent with St. Peter's coming to Rome under Claudius; which let them look to whose interest it is that it should be so; I mean them of the church of Rome. And for his saying that they suffered martyrdom *κατα τον αυτον καιρον*, at the same time; it does not necessarily imply their suffering the same day and year, but admits of some considerable distance of time: it being elsewhere granted by our author, that this phrase, *κατα τον τον χρονον*, is often used by Josephus in a lax sense, as including what happened within the compass of some years.

10. To enervate the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, it is said, (with how little pretence of reason let any man judge,) that Eusebius quotes it out of a book of Clemens, that is now lost; and that he tells us not whence St. Clemens derived the report: that abundance of apocryphal writings were extant in his time; and that he himself inserts a great many frivolous traditions into his writings. Which if it were granted would do no service in this cause; unless it were asserted, that all things he says are doubtful or fabulous, because some few are so.

11. Much after the same rate it is argued against Tertullian, that he was a man of great credulity; that he sets down some passages concerning St. John which are not related by other writers of those times; that he was mistaken in our Saviour's age at the time of his passion; that he was imposed upon in the account he says Tiberius the emperor sent to the senate concerning Christ; which, forsooth, must needs be false, because no mention is made of it by Suetonius, Tacitus, or Dio.

12. The exceptions to Caius are no whit stronger than the former, viz.; that he flourished but in the beginning of the third century, when many false reports were set on foot; and that it is not reasonable to believe, that in those times of persecution the tombs of the apostles should be undefaced, and had in such public honor and venera-

tion. As if the places where the apostles were buried could not be familiarly known to Christians, without being commonly shown to their heathen persecutors, or without erecting pompous and stately monuments over their graves, to provoke the rage and malice of their enemies to fall foul upon them.

13. Against Origen, nothing is pretended, but what is notoriously vain and frivolous; as, that perhaps his reports concerning the travels of the apostles are not sufficiently certain: that in some other cases he produces testimonies out of apocryphal writings; and that many things are reported concerning himself which are at best obscure and ambiguous; and that Baronius and Valesius cannot agree about the time of his journey to Rome. I have but lightly touched upon most of these exceptions, because the very mention of them is enough to supersede a studied and operose confutation; and, indeed, they are generally such as may with equal force be levelled almost against any ancient history.

14. Thirdly; I observe how far zeal, even for the best cause, may sometimes transport learned men to secure it by undue and imprudent methods; and such as one would think were made use of rather to show the acumen and subtilty of the author than any strength or cogency in the arguments.* Plain it is, that they who set themselves to undermine this story, design therein to serve the interests of the Protestant cause, against the vain and unjust pretences of the see of Rome, and utterly to subvert the very foundations of that title whereby they lay claim to St. Peter's power. This indeed, could it be fairly made good, and without offering violence to the authority of those ancient and venerable sages of the Christian church, would give a mortal blow to the Romish cause, and free us from several of their groundless and sophistical allegations. But when this cannot be done without calling in question the first and most early records of the church, and throwing off the authority of the ancients, *non tali auxilio*—truth needs no such weapons to defend itself, but is able to stand up, and triumph in its own strength, without calling in such indirect artifices to support it. We can safely grant the main of the story, that St. Peter did go to Rome, and came thither *εν τελει*, (as Origen expressly says he did) about the latter end of his life, and there suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ; and yet is this no disadvantage to ourselves; nay, it is that which utterly confounds all their accounts of things, and proves their pretended story of St. Peter's being twenty-five years bishop of that see, to be not only vain, but false, as has been sufficiently shown in the foregoing section. But to deny that St. Peter ever was at Rome, contrary to the whole stream and current of antiquity, and the unanimous consent of the most early writers, and that merely upon little surmises, and trifling cavils; and in order thereunto to treat the reverend fathers, whose memories have ever been dear and

sacred in the Christian church, with rude reflections and spiteful insinuations, is a course, I confess, not over ingenuous, and might give too much occasion to our adversaries of the church of Rome, to charge us (as they sometimes do, falsely enough) with a neglect of antiquity, and contempt of the fathers; but that it is notoriously known, that all the great names of the Protestant party, men most celebrated for learning and piety, have always paid a most just deference and veneration to antiquity; and upon that account have freely allowed this story of St. Peter's going to Rome, as our author, who opposes it, is forced to grant.

15. Fourthly; it deserves to be considered, whether the needless questioning a story so well attested, may not in time open too wide a gap to shake the credit of all history. For if things done at so remote a distance of time, and which have all the evidence that can be desired to make them good, may be doubted of or denied, merely for the sake of some few weak and insignificant exceptions which may be made against them, what is there that can be secure? There are few passages of ancient history, against which a man of wit and parts may not start some objections, either from the writers of them, or from the account of the things themselves; and shall they therefore be presently discarded, or condemned to the number of the false or fabulous? If this liberty be indulged, farewell church history; nay, it is to be feared, whether the sacred story will be able long to maintain its divine authority. We live in an age of great scepticism and infidelity, wherein men have, in a great measure, put off the reverence due to sacred things; and witty men seem much delighted to hunt out objections, bestow their censures, expose the credit of former ages, and to believe little but what themselves either see or hear. And therefore it will become wise and good men to be very tender how they loosen, much more remove the old landmarks which the fathers have set, lest we run ourselves before we be aware into a labyrinth and confusion, from whence it will not be easy to get out.*

* The value of these observations will be acknowledged by every candid inquirer after truth: nor can it be doubted but that, next to the generating of angry feeling, the greatest evil which results from the existence of religious disputes, is the habit of scepticism they foster, so that doubt is engendered with regard to one class of truths by the very process employed to subduce it in respect to another. This, however, is a consequence of the disingenuousness with which inquiries are pursued when undertaken in the spirit of partizanship, and is not a necessary attendant upon controversy, as the natural fruit of difference of opinion among men of active and inquisitive intellects. To question the reality of a fact which cannot be distinctly disproved is to place the system contended for in peril; for the moment it is allowed that the disputed circumstance is of such value to the opposite argument, that not to dispute it is to leave the adversary in possession of the field, one of these things must of necessity follow—either the testimony of history is invalidated by bold attacks on evidence sufficiently probable for conviction in all ordinary cases; or the victory remains on the side of those who have the fact, so confessedly important, for the support of their opinions.—*En.*

* The observation of Lord Bacon (Advancement of Learning, p. 1.) may be aptly applied to more than one class of disputants: "It is good to ask the question which Job asked of his friends, 'Will you lie for God, as one man will do for another?'"—*Ed.*

S T. PAUL.

SECTION I.

Of St. Paul, from his Birth till his Conversion.

THOUGH St. Paul was none of the twelve apostles, yet had he the honor of being an apostle extraordinary, and to be immediately called in a way peculiar to himself. He justly deserves a place next St. Peter; for as "in their lives they were pleasant and lovely;" so "in their death they were not divided;" especially if it be true, that they both suffered, not only for the same cause, but at the same time, as well as place. St. Paul was born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia; a city infinitely rich and populous: and what contributed more to the fame and honor of it, an academy furnished with schools of learning, where the scholars so closely plied their studies, that, as Strabo informs us, they excelled in all arts of polite learning and philosophy those of other places; yea, even of Alexandria and Athens itself; and that even Rome was beholden to it for many of its best professors. It was a Roman municipium, or free corporation, invested with many franchises and privileges by Julius Cæsar and Augustus, who granted to the inhabitants of it the honors and immunities of citizens of Rome. In which respect St. Paul owned and asserted it as the privilege of his birthright, that he was a Roman, and thereby free from being bound or beaten.* True it is, that St. Jerome (followed herein by one who himself travelled in those parts) makes him born at Gischalis, a well-fortified town in Judea, which being besieged and taken by the Roman army, his parents fled away with him and dwelt at Tarsus. But besides that this contradicts St. Paul, who expressly affirms that he was born at Tarsus, there needs no more to confute this opinion, than that St. Jerome elsewhere slights it as a fabulous report.

His parents were Jews, and that of the ancient stock, not entering in by the gate of proselytism, but originally descended from that nation; which surely he means when he says, that he was "an Hebrew of the Hebrews;" either because both his parents were Jews, or rather that all his ancestors had been so. They belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, whose founder was the youngest son of the old patriarch Jacob, who thus prophesied of him: "Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil;"† This prophetic character Tertullian, and others after him, will have to be accomplished in our apostle. As a "ravening wolf in the morning devouring the prey;" that is, as a persecutor of the churches in the first part of his life, destroying the flock of God: "in the evening dividing the spoil;" that is, in his declining and reduced age, as doctor of the nations, feeding and distributing to Christ's sheep.

3. We find him described by two names in Scripture, one Hebrew and the other Latin; probably referring both to the Jewish and Roman

capacity and relation. The one Saul, a name frequent and common in the tribe of Benjamin ever since the first king of Israel, who was of that name, was chosen out of that tribe; in memory whereof they were wont to give their children this name at their circumcision: his other was Paul, assumed by him, as some think, at his conversion, to denote his humility; as others, in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor; in imitation of the generals and emperors of Rome, who were wont from the places and nations that they conquered to assume the name, as an additional honor and title to themselves: as Scipio Africanus, Cæsar Germanicus, Parthicus, Sarmaticus, &c. But this seems no way consistent with the great humility of this apostle. More probable therefore it is, what Origen thinks, that he had a double name given him at his circumcision; Saul, relating to his Jewish original, and Paul, referring to the Roman corporation where he was born: and this the Scripture seems to favor when it says, "Saul, who is also called Paul." And this, perhaps, may be the reason why St. Luke, so long as he speaks of him as conversant among the Jews in Syria, styles him Saul; but afterwards, when he left those parts and went among the Gentiles, he gives him the name of Paul, as a name more frequent and familiarly known to them: and, for the same reason, no doubt, he constantly calls himself by that name in all his epistles written to the Gentile churches. Or, if it was taken up by him afterwards, it was probably done at his conversion, according to the custom and manner of the Hebrews, who used many times, upon solemn and eminent occasions, especially upon their entering upon a more strict and religious course of life, to change their names, and assume one which they had not before.

4. In his youth he was brought up in the schools of Tarsus, fully instructed in all the liberal arts and sciences, whereby he became admirably acquainted with foreign and external authors. Together with which, he was brought up to a particular trade and course of life; according to the great maxim and principle of the Jews, that "He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief." They thought it not only fit, but a necessary part of education, for their wisest and most learned rabbins to be brought up to a manual trade, whereby, if occasion was, they might be able to maintain themselves. Hence, as Drusus observes, nothing more common in their writings, than to have them denominated from their callings, Rabbi Jose, the tanner, Rabbi Jochanan, the shoemaker, Rabbi Juda, the baker, &c. A custom taken up by the Christians, especially the monks and ascetics of the primitive times, who, together with their strict profession, and almost incredible exercises of devotion, each took upon him a particular trade, whereat he daily wrought, and by his own hand-labor maintained himself. And this course of life the Jews were very careful should be free from all suspicion of scandal, (as they call it,) a clean, that is, honest trade; being wont to say, "That he was happy that had his parents employed in an honest and commendable calling;" as he was miserable, who saw them conversant in any sordid and dishonest course of

* Acts xxii. 25, 26.

† Gen. xlix. 27.

life. The trade our apostle was put to, was that of tent-making;* whereat he wrought, for some particular reasons, even after his calling to the apostolate. An honest but mean course of life; and, as Chrysostom observes, an argument that his parents were not of the nobler and better rank; however, it was a useful and gainful trade, especially in those warlike countries, where armies had such frequent use of tents.

5. Having run through the whole circle of the sciences, and laid the sure foundations of human learning at Tarsus, he was by his parents sent to Jerusalem, to be perfected in the study of the law, and put under the tutorage of Rabban Gamaliel. This Gamaliel was the son of Rabban Symeon (probably presumed to be the same Symeon that came into the temple, and took Christ into his arms†) president of the court of the Sanhedrim: he was a doctor of the law, a person of great wisdom and prudence, and head at that time of one of the families of the schools at Jerusalem. A man of chief eminency and authority in the Jewish Sanhedrim, and president of it at that very time when our blessed Saviour was brought before it. He lived to a great age, and was buried by Onkelos the proselyte, author of the Chaldee paraphrase, (one who infinitely loved and honored him,) at his own vast expense and charge. He it was that made that wise and excellent speech in the Sanhedrim, in favor of the apostles and their religion. Nay, he himself is said (though I know not why) to have been a Christian; and his sitting among the senators to have been connived at by the apostles, that he might be the better friend to their affairs. Chrysippus, presbyter of the church of Jerusalem, adds, that he was brother's son to Nicodemus, together with whom he and his son Abib were baptized by Peter and John. This account he derives from Lucian, a presbyter also of that church, under John, patriarch of Jerusalem; who in an epistle of his still extant, tells us, that he had this, together with some other things, communicated to him in a vision by Gamaliel himself; which, if true, no better evidence could be desired in this matter. At the feet of this Gamaliel, St. Paul tells us, he was brought up; alluding to the custom of the Jewish masters, who were wont to sit, while their disciples and scholars stood at their feet. Which honorary custom continued until the death of this Gamaliel, and was then left off. Their own Talmud telling us, "That since our old Rabban Gamaliel died, the honor of the law was perished, purity and pharisaism were destroyed." Which the gloss thus explains: "That whilst he lived, men were sound, and studied the law standing; but he being dead, weakness crept into the world, and they were forced to sit."

6. Under the tuition of this great master,‡ St. Paul was educated in the knowledge of the law, wherein he made such quick and vast improvements, that he soon outstripped his fellow-disciples. Amongst the various sects at that time in the Jewish church, he was especially educated in the principles and institutions of the Pharisees; of

which sect was both his father and his master; whereof he became a most earnest and zealous professor; this being, as himself tells us, the strictest sect of their religion. For the understanding whereof, it may not be amiss a little to inquire into the temper and manner of this sect. Josephus,* though himself a Pharisee, gives this character of them; "That they were a crafty and subtle generation of men; and so perverse, even to princes themselves, that they would not fear, many times, openly to affront and oppose them." And so far had they insinuated themselves into the affections and estimations of the populace, that their good or ill word was enough to make or blast any one with the people; who would implicitly believe them, let their report be never so false or malicious.† And therefore Alexander Jannæus, when he lay a-dying, wisely advised his queen by all means to comply with them, and to seem to govern by their counsel and direction; affirming that this had been the greatest cause of his fatal miscarriage, and that which had derived the odium of the nation upon him; that he had offended this sort of men. Certain it is, that they were infinitely proud and insolent, surly and ill-natured; that they hated all mankind but themselves, and censured whoever would not be of their way, as a villain and reprobate; greatly zealous to gather proselytes to their party, not to make them more religious, but more fierce and cruel, more carping and censorious, more heady and high-minded; in short,—"twofold more the children of the devil than they were before." All religion and kindness was confined within the bounds of their own party; and the first principles wherewith they inspired their new converts were, that none but they were the godly party, and that all other persons were slaves and sons of the earth; and therefore especially endeavored to inspire them with a mighty zeal and fierceness against all that differed from them; so that if any one did but speak a good word of our Saviour, he should be presently excommunicated and cast out, persecuted and devoted to the death. To this end they were wont not only to separate, but discriminate themselves from the herd and community, by some peculiar notes and badges of distinction; such as their long robes, broad phylacteries, and the large fringes and borders of their garments, whereby they made themselves known from the rest of men. These dogged and ill-natured principles, together with their seditious, unnatural, unjust, unmerciful, and uncharitable behavior, which otherwise would have made them stink above ground in the nostrils of men, they sought to palliate and varnish over with a more than ordinary pretence and profession of religion; but were especially active and diligent in what cost them little, the outward instances of religion; such duties especially as did more immediately refer to God; as frequent fasting and praying,—which they did very often and very long, with demure and mortified looks, in a whining and an affected tone, and this in almost every corner of the streets; and indeed so contrived the scheme of their religion, that what they did might appear

* Acts xviii. 3.

† Acts xxii. 3. and iv. 34.

‡ Gal. i. 14.

* Antiq. Jud. b. xvii. cap. 3, p. 585.

† Antiq. Jud. lib. xiii. c. 23, p. 463.

above ground, where they might be seen of men to the best advantage.

7. Though this seems to have been the general temper and disposition of the party, yet doubtless there were some amongst them of better and honester principles than the rest. In which number we have just reason to reckon our apostle;—who yet was deeply leavened with the active and fiery genius of the sect; not able to brook any opposite party in religion, especially if late and novel. Insomuch, that when the Jews were resolved to do execution upon Stephen, he stood by and kept the clothes of them that did it. Whether he was any further engaged in the death of this innocent and good man we do not find. However, this was enough loudly to proclaim his approbation and consent. And therefore, elsewhere we find him indicting himself for this fact, and pleading guilty. “When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.”* God chiefly inspects the heart, and if the vote be passed there, writes the man guilty, though he stir no further. It is easy to murder another by a silent wish, or a passionate desire. In all moral actions God values the will for the deed, and reckons the man a companion in the sin, who, though possibly he may never actually join in it, does yet inwardly applaud and like it. The storm thus begun increased apace; and a violent persecution began to arise, which miserably afflicted and dispersed the Christians at Jerusalem. In which our apostle was a prime agent and minister, raging about in all parts with a mad and ungovernable zeal, searching out the saints, beating them in the synagogues, compelling many to blaspheme, imprisoning others, and procuring them to be put to death. Indeed, he was a kind of *inquisitor hæreticæ pravitatis* to the high-priest, by whom he was employed to hunt and find out these upstart heretics,† who preached against the law of Moses and the traditions of the fathers. Accordingly, having made strange havoc at Jerusalem, he addressed himself to the Sanhedrim, and there took out a warrant and commission to go down and ransack the synagogues at Damascus.‡ How eternally insatiable is fury and a misguided zeal!—How restless and unwearied in its designs of cruelty! It had already sufficiently harassed the poor Christians at Jerusalem; but not content to have vexed them there, and to have driven them thence, it persecuted them unto “strange cities;” following them even to Damascus itself, whither many of these persecuted Christians had fled for

shelter; resolving to bring up those whom he found there to Jerusalem, in order to their punishment and execution. For the Jewish Sanhedrim had not only power of seizing and scourging offenders against their law, within the bounds of their own country, but, by the connivance and favor of the Romans, might send into other countries, where there were any synagogues that acknowledged a dependence in religious matters upon the council at Jerusalem, to apprehend them, as here they sent Paul to Damascus to fetch up what Christians he could find, to be arraigned and sentenced at Jerusalem.

8. But God, who had designed him for work of another nature, and “separated him from his mother’s womb to the preaching of the gospel.”* stopped him in his journey. For while he was, together with his company, travelling on the road, not far from Damascus, on a sudden a gleam of light, beyond the splendor and brightness of the sun, was darted from heaven upon them; whereat, being strangely amazed and confounded, they all fell to the ground, a voice calling to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” To which he replied, “Lord, who art thou?” Who told him, that “he was Jesus whom he persecuted;” that what was done to the members was done to the head; that it was hard for him “to kick against the pricks;” that he now appeared to him to make choice of him for a “minister” and a “witness” of what he had now seen and should after hear; that he would stand by him, and preserve him, and make him a great instrument in the conversion of the Gentile world. This said, he asked our Lord “what he would have him to do;” who bade him go into the city, where he should receive his answer. St. Paul’s companions, who had been present at this transaction,† heard the voice, but saw not him that spoke to him; though elsewhere the apostle himself affirms, that they “saw the light, but heard not the voice” of him that spake: that is, they heard a confused sound, but not a distinct and articulate voice; or, more probably, being ignorant of the Hebrew language, wherein our Lord spake to St. Paul, they heard the words, but knew not the sense and meaning of them.

9. St. Paul by this time was gotten up, but though he found his feet, yet he had lost his eyes, being stricken blind with the extraordinary brightness of the light; and was accordingly led by his companions into Damascus. In which condition he there remained, fasting three days together. At this time we may probably suppose it was, that he had that vision and ecstasy, wherein he was taken up into the “third heaven,”‡ where he saw

* Acts xxii. 20.

† Chap. ix. 1.

‡ Damascus is distant from Jerusalem about one hundred and thirty miles, and was once the capital of Syria. It was still, when St. Paul visited it, one of the wealthiest and most splendid cities of the east; and, like the rest of the country, was under the dominion of the Romans. Had the object of Saul been otherwise than of a purely religious nature, he must have referred to the heathen governor for the desired remedy; but the Romans, with their accustomed policy, had left the conquered people to arrange their religious affairs according to their own wishes; and though the authority of the San-

hedrim could not properly be regarded as extending to Damascus, the stretch of power was allowed, since the price of conciliating so strong a party as the Pharisees would, in this instance, be only the sacrifice of some unknown and, perhaps, seditious individuals. It has been remarked on this subject, that the power of the Sanhedrim and the high-priest, like the authority of the pope by the Papists, was acknowledged by the Jews of all countries; but of course it could only be exercised by the sufferance of the civil magistrate.—Ed.

* Gal. i. 15.

† Acts xxii. 9.

‡ 2 Cor. xii. 1.

and heard things great and unutterable, and was fully instructed in the mysteries of the gospel; and hence expressly affirms, that he was not "taught the gospel which he preached by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* There was, at this time, at Damascus one Ananias, a very devout and religious man, (one of the seventy disciples, as the ancients inform us, and probably the first planter of the Christian church in this city,) and though a Christian, yet of great reputation amongst all the Jews. To him our Lord appeared, commanding him to go into such a street, and to such a house, and there "inquire for one Saul of Tarsus," who was now at prayer, and had seen him in a vision coming to him, to lay his hands upon him, that he might receive his sight. Ananias started at the name of the man, having heard of his bloody temper and practices, and upon what errand he was now come down to the city. But our Lord, to take off his fears, told him, that he mistook the man, that he had now taken him to be a chosen vessel, to preach the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and before the greatest potentates upon earth, acquainting him with what great things he should both do and suffer for his sake; what chains and imprisonments, what racks and scourges, what hunger and thirst, what shipwrecks and death he should undergo. Upon this Ananias went, laid his hands upon him, told him that our Lord had sent him to him that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost; which was no sooner done, but thick films, like scales, fell from his eyes, and his sight returned. And the next thing he did was to be baptized, and solemnly initiated into the Christian faith. After which he joined himself to the disciples of that place, to the equal joy and wonder of the church, that the wolf should so soon lay down its fierceness, and put on the meek nature of a lamb; that he who had lately been so violent a persecutor, should now become not a professor only, but a preacher of that faith which before he had routed and destroyed.

SECTION II.

Of St. Paul, from his Conversion till the Council at Jerusalem.

SAINT Paul staid not long at Damascus after his conversion,† but having received an immediate intimation from heaven, probably in the ecstasy wherein he was caught up thither, he waited for no other counsel or direction in the case, lest he should seem to derive his mission and authority from men, and "being not disobedient to the heavenly vision," he presently retired out of the city; and the sooner, probably, to decline the odium of the Jews, and the effects of that rage and malice

which he was sure would pursue and follow him. He withdrew into the parts of Arabia, (those parts of it that lay next to the *χωρα Δαμασκηνή*,* the "region of Damascus;" nay, Damascus itself was sometimes accounted part of Arabia, as we shall note by and by from Tertullian,) where he spent the first-fruits of his ministry, preaching up and down for three years together. After which he returned back to Damascus,† preached openly in the synagogues, and convinced the Jews of Christ's messiahship, and the truth of his religion. Angry and enraged hereat, they resolved his ruin; which they knew no better way to effect, than by exasperating and incensing the civil powers against him. Damascus was a place not more venerable for its antiquity, (if not built by, at least it gave title to Abraham's steward, hence called Eliezer of Damascus,) than it was considerable for its strength, stateliness, and situation: it was the noblest city of all Syria, (as Justin of old, and the Arabian geographer, has since informed us; and the prophet Isaiah‡ before both, calls it "the head of Syria,") seated in a most healthful air, in a most fruitful soil, watered with most pleasant fountains and rivers, rich in merchandize, adorned with stately buildings, goodly and magnificent temples, and fortified with strong guards and garrisons; in all which respects, Julian calls it the holy and great Damascus, "the eye of the whole east." Situate it was between Libanus and Mount Hermon; and though probably belonging to Syria, yet *Arabia retro deputabatur* (as Tertullian tells us) was anciently reckoned to Arabia. Accordingly at this time it was under the government of Aretas, (father-in-law to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, whose daughter the said Herod had married, but afterwards turned off; which became the occasion of a war between those two princes,) king of Arabia Petraea, a prince tributary to the Roman empire. By him there was an *ἐπαρχος*, or governor, who had jurisdiction over the whole Syria Damascena, placed over it, who kept constant residence in the city, as a place of very great importance. To him the Jews made their address, with crafty and cunning insinuations, persuading him to apprehend St. Paul, possibly under the notion of a spy, there being war at this time between the Romans and that king. Hereupon the gates were shut, and extraordinary guards set, and all engines that could be laid to take him. But the disciples, to prevent their cruel designs, at night put him into a basket, and let him down over the city wall.—And the place, we are told, is still showed to travellers, not far from the gate, thence called St. Paul's gate at this day.

2. Having thus made his escape, he set forwards for Jerusalem, where when he arrived, he addressed himself to the church.|| But they, knowing the former temper and principles of the man, universally shunned his company; till Barnabas brought him to Peter, who was not yet cast into prison, and to James, our Lord's brother, bishop of Jerusalem, acquainting them with the manner of his conversion; and by them he was familiarly entertained. Here he staid fifteen days, preaching Christ, and confuting the Hellenist

* Gal. i. 10, 11.

† Our author dates the conversion of the apostle some years earlier than other writers. Lardner, after a very careful review of different circumstances and testimonies, concludes that it most probably took place about the year 36 or 37.—Works, vol. vi. p. 241.—Ed.

* Gal. i. 17, 18. † Acts ix. 23; 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

‡ Isa. vii. 7.

|| Acts ix. 26; Gal. i. 18, 19.

Jews with a mighty courage and resolution. But snares were here again laid to entrap him; as malice can as well cease to be, as to be restless and active. Whereupon he was warned by God in a vision, that his testimony would not find acceptance in that place; that therefore he should leave it, and betake himself to the Gentiles. Accordingly, being conducted by the brethren to Cæsarea,* he set sail for Tarsus, his native city; from whence, not long after, he was fetched by Barnabas to Antioch,† to assist him in propagating Christianity in that place: in which employment they continued there a whole year. And now it was that the disciples of the religion were at this place first called Christians; according to the manner of all other institutions, who were wont to take their denominations from the first authors and founders of them. Before this they were usually styled Nazarenes, as being the disciples and followers of Jesus of Nazareth, a name by which the Jews in scorn call them to this day, with the same intent that the Gentiles of old used to call them Galileans. The name of Nazarenes was henceforward fixed upon those Jewish converts, who mixed the law and the gospel, and compounded a religion out of Judaism and Christianity. The fixing this honorable name upon the disciples of the crucified Jesus was done at Antioch, (as an ancient historian informs us)‡ about the beginning of Claudius's reign, ten years after Christ's ascension; nay, he further adds, that Euodius, lately ordained bishop of that place, was the person that imposed this name upon them, styling them Christians, who before were called Nazarenes and Galileans. I may not omit, what a learned man has observed,§ that the word *χρηματισται*, used by St. Luke, (they were called,) implies the thing to have been done by some public and solemn act and declaration of the whole church; such being the use of the word in the imperial edicts and proclamations of those times, the emperors being said *χρηματίζειν*, "to style themselves," when they publicly proclaimed by what titles they would be called. When any province submitted itself to the Roman empire, the emperor was wont by public edict, *χρηματίζειν αυτου* to entitle himself to the government and jurisdiction of it, and the people to several great privileges and immunities. In a grateful sense whereof, the people usually made this time the solemn date of their common epocha, or computation. Thus (as the forementioned historian informs us||) it was in the particular case of Antioch; and thence their public æra was called *χρηματισμος των Αντιοχειων*, "the ascription of the people at Antioch." Such being the general acceptance of the word, St. Luke, (who was himself a native of this city) makes use of it to express that solemn declaration whereby the disciples of the religion entitled themselves to the name of Christians.

3. It happened, about this time, that a terrible famine, foretold by Agabus,¶ afflicted several parts

of the Roman empire, but especially Judæa; the consideration whereof made the Christians at Antioch compassionate the case of their suffering brethren, and they accordingly raised considerable contributions for their relief and succor, which they sent to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Paul; who having despatched their errand in that city, went back to Antioch; where, while they were joining in the public exercises of their religion, it was revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas to preach the gospel in other places;* which was done accordingly, and they, by prayer, fasting, and imposition of hands, were immediately deputed for that service. Hence they departed to Seleucia, and thence sailed to Cyprus, where at Salamis, a great city in that island, they preached in the synagogues of the Jews. Hence they removed to Paphos, the residence of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of the island, a man of great wisdom and prudence, but miserably seduced by the wicked artifices of Bar-Jesus, a Jewish impostor, who calling himself Elymas, or the magician, vehemently opposed the apostles, and kept the proconsul from embracing of the faith. Nay, one who pretends to be ancient enough to know it, seems to intimate, that he not only spake, but wrote against St. Paul's doctrine, and the faith of Christ. However, the proconsul calls for the apostles, and St. Paul first takes Elymas to task; and having severely checked him for his malicious opposing of the truth, told him, that the divine vengeance was now ready to seize upon him. Upon which he was immediately struck blind. The vengeance of God observing herein a kind of just proportion, that he should be punished with the loss of his bodily eyes, who had so wilfully and maliciously shut the eyes of his mind against the light of the gospel, and had endeavored to keep not only himself, but others under so much blindness and darkness. This miracle turned the scale with the proconsul, and quickly brought him over a convert to the faith.

4. After this success in Cyprus, he went to Perga, in Pamphylia,† where taking Titus along with him in the room of Mark, who was returned to Jerusalem, they went to Antioch, the metropolis of Pisidia:‡ where entering into the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath-day, after some sections of the law were read, they were invited by the rulers of the synagogue to discourse a little to the people; which St. Paul did in a large and eloquent sermon, wherein he put them in mind of the many great and particular blessings which God had heaped upon the Jews, from the first originals of that nation; that he had crowned them all with the sending of his Son to be the Messiah and the Saviour; that though the Jews had ignorantly crucified this just, innocent person, yet that God, according to his own predictions, had raised him up from the dead; that through him they preached forgiveness of sins, and that by him

* Acts ix. 30.

† Chap. xi. 26.

‡ Joan. Antiochen. in Chronol. MS. a Selden, cit. de Synedr. lib. i. c. 8. p. 226.

§ Greg. not. et obs. cap. 36.

|| J. Antioch. Chron. lib. ix.

¶ Acts xi. 27.

† Acts xiii. 2.

† Acts xiii. 13, 14.

‡ The Antioch here mentioned is distinguished as the metropolis of Pisidia, to prevent its being confounded with the city of the same name in Syria, where the believers were first called Christians. Pisidia was a province of Asia Minor.—Ed.

alone it was that men, if ever, must be justified and acquitted from that guilt and condemnation which all the pompous ceremonies and ministries of the Mosaic law could never do away; that therefore they should do well to take heed, lest by their opposing this way of salvation, they should bring upon themselves that prophetic curse which God had threatened to the Jews of old, for their great contumacy and neglect. This sermon wanted not its due effects. The proselyte Jews desired the apostles to discourse again to them of this matter the next Sabbath-day; the apostles also persuading them to continue firm in the belief of these things. The day was no sooner come, but the whole city, almost, flocked to be their auditors; which when the Jews saw, actuated by a spirit of envy, they began to blaspheme, and to contradict the apostles; who, nothing daunted, told them, that our Lord had charged them first to preach the gospel to the Jews, which since they so obstinately rejected, they were now to address themselves to the Gentiles; who hearing this, exceedingly rejoiced at the good news, and magnified the word of God; and as many of them as were thus prepared and disposed towards eternal life, heartily closed with it and embraced it. The apostles preaching not there only, but through the whole country round about. The Jews, more exasperated than before, resolved to be rid of their company, and to that end persuaded some of the more devout and honorable women to deal with their husbands, persons of prime rank and quality in the city, by whose means they were driven out of those parts. Whereat St. Paul and Barnabas shaking off the dust of their feet, as a testimony against their ingratitude and infidelity, departed from them.

5. The next place they went to was Iconium; where at first they found kind entertainment and good success; God setting a seal to their doctrine by the testimony of his miracles.* But here the Jewish malice began again to ferment, exciting the people to sedition, and mutiny against them. Inasmuch, that hearing of a design to stone them, they seasonably withdrew to Lystra; where they first made their way by a miraculous cure. For St. Paul seeing an impotent cripple, that had been lame from his mother's womb, cured him with the speaking of a word. The people who beheld the miracle, had so much natural logic as to infer that there was a divinity in the thing; though mistaking the author, they applied it to the instruments, crying out, that the gods in human shape were come down from heaven. Paul, as being chief speaker, they termed Mercury, the god of speech and eloquence; Barnabas, by reason of his age and gravity, they called Jupiter, the father of their gods; accordingly the Syriac interpreter here renders Jupiter "the Lord, or sovereign of the gods." The fame of this being spread over the city, the priest of Jupiter brought oxen dressed up with garlands, after the Gentile rites, to the house where the apostles were, to do sacrifice to them. Which they no sooner understood, but in detestation of those undue honors offered them; they rent their clothes, and told them that they were men of the same make and temper, of the

same passions and infirmities with themselves; that the design of their preaching was to convert them from these vain idolatries and superstitions to the worship of the true God, the great Parent of the world; who though heretofore he had left men to themselves, to go on in their own ways of idolatrous worship, yet had he given sufficient evidence of himself in the constant returns of a gracious and benign providence, in crowning the year with fruitful seasons, and other acts of common kindness and bounty to mankind.

6. A short discourse; but very rational and convictive, which it may not be amiss a little more particularly to consider, and the method which the apostle uses to convince these blind idolaters. He proves divine honors to be due to God alone, as the sovereign Being of the world; and that there is such a supreme infinite Being he argues from his works both of creation and Providence. Creation: "He is the living God that made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein." Providence: "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Than which no argument can be more apt and proper to work upon the minds of men. "That which may be known of God is manifest to the Gentiles, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, even his eternal power and godhead, are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made." It being impossible impartially to survey the several parts of the creation, and not see in every place evident footsteps of an infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. Who can look up unto the heavens, and not there discern an Almighty wisdom beautifully garnishing those upper regions, distinguishing the circuits, and perpetuating the motions of the heavenly lights? Placing the sun in the middle of the heavens, that he might equally dispense and communicate his light and heat to all parts of the world, and not burn the earth with the too near approach of his scorching beams: by which means the creatures are refreshed and cheered, the earth impregnated with fruits and flowers by the benign influence of a vital heat; and the vicissitudes and seasons of the year regularly distinguished by their constant and orderly revolutions. Whence are the great orbs of heaven kept in continual motion, always going in the same tract, but because there is a superior power that keeps these great wheels a going? Who is it "that poises the balancings of the clouds; that divides a water-course for the overflowing of waters, and a way for the lightning of the thunder?" Who can "bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" Or who can "bring forth Mazaroth in his season, or guide Arcturus with his sons?" Do these come by chance? Or by the secret appointment of infinite wisdom? Who can consider the admirable thinness and purity of the air; its immediate subserviency to the great ends of the creation, its being the treasury of vital breath to all living creatures, without which the next moment must put a period to our days, and not reflect upon that Divine wisdom that contrived it? If we come down upon the earth, there we discover a divine Providence, supporting it with the

* Acts xiv. 1.

pillars of an invisible power. "stretching the north over the empty space, and hanging the earth upon nothing;" filling it with great variety of admirable and useful creatures, and maintaining them all according to their kinds at his own cost and charges. It is he that clothes the grass with a delightful verdure; that "crowns the year with his loving-kindness," and "makes the valleys stand thick with corn;" that "causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herd for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart;" that beautifies the lilies that neither toil nor spin, and that with a glory that outshines Solomon in all his pomp and grandeur. From land let us ship our observations to sea, and there we may descry the wise effects of infinite understanding: a wide ocean fitly disposed for the mutual commerce and correspondence of one part of mankind with another; filled with great and admirable fishes, and enriched with the treasures of the deep. What but an Almighty arm can shut in the sea with doors, bind it by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass, and tie up its wild raging waves with no stronger cordage than ropes of sand? Who but he commands the storm, and stills the tempest? and brings the mariner, when at his wit's end in the midst of the greatest dangers, to his desired haven? "They that go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." So impossible is it for a man to stand in any part of the creation, wherein he may not discern evidences enough of an infinitely wise, gracious, and omnipotent Being. Thus much I thought good to add, to illustrate the apostle's argument; whence he strongly infers, that it is very reasonable that we should worship and adore this great Creator and benefactor, and not transfer the honors due to him alone upon men of frail and sinful passions, and much less upon dumb idols, unable either to make or to help themselves. An argument, which though very plain and plausible, and adapted to the meanest understandings; yet was all little enough to restrain the people from offering sacrifice to them. But how soon was the wind turned into another corner? The old spirit of the Jews did still haunt and pursue them; who coming from Antioch and Iconium, exasperated and stirred up the multitude. And they who just before accounted them as gods, used them now worse, not only than ordinary men, but slaves. For in a mighty rage they fall upon St. Paul, stone him, (as they thought, dead,) and then drag him out of the city: whither the Christians of that place coming, probably to inter him; he suddenly revived, and rose up amongst them, and the next day went thence to Derbe.

7. Here they preached the gospel, and then returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, confirming the Christians of those places in the belief and profession of Christianity, earnestly persuading them to persevere, and not be discouraged with those troubles and persecutions which they must expect would attend the profession of the gospel. And that all this might succeed the better, with fasting and prayer they ordained governors and pastors in every church; and having

recommended them to the grace of God, departed from them. From hence they passed through Pisidia, and thence came to Pamphylia; and having preached to the people at Perga, they went down to Attalia. And thus, having at this time finished the whole circuit of their ministry, they returned back to Antioch, in Syria, the place whence they had first set out. Here they acquainted the church with the various transactions and successes of their travels, and how great a door had thereby been opened to the conversion of the Gentile world.

8. While St. Paul staid at Antioch, there arose that famous controversy about the observation of the Mosaic rites,* set on foot and brought in by some Jewish converts that came down thither, whereby great disturbances and distractions were made in the minds of the people. For the composing whereof, the church of Antioch resolved to send Paul and Barnabas to consult with the apostles and church at Jerusalem. In their way thither, they declared to the brethren, as they went along, what success they had had in the conversion of the Gentiles. Being come to Jerusalem, they first addressed themselves to Peter, James, and John, the pillars and principal persons in that place; by whom they were kindly entertained, and admitted to the "right hand of fellowship." And perceiving by the account which St. Paul gave them, that the "gospel of the uncircumcision was committed" to him, as that of the "circumcision" was to Peter; they ratified it by compact and agreement, that Peter should preach to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles. Hereupon a council was summoned, wherein Peter having declared his sense of things, Paul and Barnabas acquainted them what great things God by their ministry had done among the Gentiles. A plain evidence, that, though uncircumcised, they were accepted by God as well as the Jews with all their legal rites and privileges. The issue of the debate was, that the Gentiles were not under the obligation of the law of Moses; and that therefore some persons of their own should be joined with Paul and Barnabas, to carry the canons and decrees of the council down to Antioch, for their fuller satisfaction in this matter. But of this affair we shall give the reader a more distinct and particular account in another place.

SECTION III.

Of St. Paul, from the time of the Synod at Jerusalem, till his departure from Athens.

SAINT Paul and his companions having received the decretal epistle, returned to Antioch; where they had not been long before Peter came thither to them; and according to the decree of the council, freely and inoffensively conversed with the Gentiles; till some of the Jews coming down thither from Jerusalem, he withdrew his converse, as if it were a thing unwarrantable and unlawful. By which means the minds of many were dissatisfied, and their consciences very much ensnared.

* Acts xv. 1.

Whereat St. Paul being exceedingly troubled, publicly rebuked him for it, and that, as the case required, with great sharpness and severity. It was not long after, that St. Paul and Barnabas resolved upon visiting the churches, which they had lately planted among the Gentiles.* To which end Barnabas determined to take his cousin Mark along with them. This Paul would by no means agree to, he having deserted them in their former journey. A little spark, which yet kindled a great feud and dissension between these two good men, and arose to that height, that in some discontent they parted from each other. So natural is it for the best of men sometimes to indulge an unwarrantable passion, and so far to espouse the interest of a private and particular humor, or rather to hazard the great law of charity, and violate the bands of friendship, than to recede from it.† The effect was, Barnabas, taking his nephew, went for Cyprus, his native country. St. Paul made choice of Silas; and the success of his undertaking being first recommended to the divine care and goodness, they set forward on their journey.

2. Their first passage was into Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches as they went along. And to that end they left with them copies of the synodical decrees, lately ordained in the council at Jerusalem. Hence we may suppose it was that he set sail for Crete, where he preached and propagated Christianity, and constituted Titus to be the first bishop and pastor of that island, whom he left there, to settle and dispose those affairs, which the shortness of his own stay in those parts would not suffer him to do. Hence he returned back unto Cilicia, and came to Lystra, where he found Timothy, whose father was a Greek, his mother a Jewish convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the advantages of a pious and religious education, and especially an incomparable skill and dexterity in the Holy Scriptures. St. Paul designed him for the companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the gospel; and knowing that his being uncircumcised would be a mighty prejudice in the opinion and estimation of the Jews, caused him to be circumcised; being willing, in all lawful and indifferent matters, (such was circumcision now become,) to accommodate himself to men's humors and apprehensions for the saving of their souls.

* Acts xv. 3.

† There does not appear to be sufficient ground for the notion which our author has here espoused, that the difference between Paul and Barnabas partook of the nature of "an unwarrantable passion." The arguments for and against taking Mark as a companion in their journey, might be urged with great zeal and earnestness, and yet leave their minds quite free from the leaven of malice. Surely it may be believed that the spirit and grace of God had sufficient power over the hearts of his chosen ministers, to prevent their falling into so fearful a sin as that of wrath. But if the Greek phrase, *γενετο ουν παροξυσμος*, "there was, therefore, a paroxysm," must be taken as implying anger against each other, the fault, it has been observed, is to be chiefly ascribed to Barnabas, who manifested too great a partiality for his relative; Paul only contending for the interests of their mission.—Ed.

3. From hence with his company he passed through Phrygia, and the country of Galatia,* where he was entertained by them with as mighty a kindness and veneration as if he had been an angel immediately sent from heaven. And being by revelation forbidden to go into Asia, by a second vision he was commanded to direct his journey to Macedonia. And here it was that St. Luke joined himself to his company, and became ever after his inseparable companion. Sailing from Troas they arrived at the island Samothracia, and thence to Neapolis; from whence they went to Philippi, the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony; where he stayed some considerable time to plant the Christian faith, and where his ministry had more particular success on Lydia, a purple-seller, born at Thyatira, baptized together with her whole family; and with her the apostle sojourned during his residence in that place. A little without this city there was a *proseucha*, (an oratory, or house of prayer,) where to the apostle and his company used frequently to retire, for the exercise of their religion, and for preaching the gospel to those that resorted thither. The Jews had three sorts of places for their public worship; the temple at Jerusalem, which was like the cathedral, or mother-church, where all sacrifices and oblations were offered, and where all males were bound, three times a year, personally to pay their devotions; their synagogue, (many whereof they had almost in every place, not unlike our parochial churches,) where the Scriptures were read and expounded, and the people taught their duty. "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day."†—And then they had their *proseucha*, (*τα κατα πολεις προσευκτηρια*, as Philo sometimes calls them,) or oratories, which were like chapels of ease to the temple and synagogues, whither the people were wont to come solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven. They were built (as Epiphanius informs us) without the city, in the open air, and uncovered; being large, spacious places, after the manner of *fora*, or market-places, and these they called *proseuchas*. And that the Jews and Samaritans had such places of devotion, he proves from this very place at Philippi, where St. Paul preached. For they had them not in Judæa only, but even at Rome itself,‡ where Tiberius (as Philo tells Caius the emperor) suffered the Jews to inhabit the trans-tiberine region, and undisturbedly to live according to the rites of their institutions; and also to have their *proseuchas*, and to meet in them, especially upon their holy sabbaths, that they might be familiarly instructed in the laws and religion of their country. Such they had also in other places, especially where they had not, or were not suffered to have synagogues for their public worship. But to return.

4. As they were going to this oratory, they were often followed by a Pythoness, a maid-servant, acted by a spirit of divination, who openly

* Acts xvi. 6.

† Acts xv. 21.

‡ "In qua te quero proseucha?"—Juv. Sat. 3, v. 296.

"Proseucha] Locus Judæorum, ubi orant."—Vet. Schol. ibid.

cried out, that "these men were the servants of the most high God, who came to show the way of salvation to the world;" so easily can heaven exert a testimony from the mouth of hell. But St. Paul, to show how little he needed Satan to be his witness, commanded the demon to come out, which immediately left her. The evil spirit thus thrown out of possession, presently raised a storm against the apostles; for the masters of the dam-sel, who used by her diabolical arts to raise great advantages to themselves, being sensible that now their gainful trade was spoiled, resolved to be revenged on them that had spoiled it. Accordingly they laid hold upon them, and dragged them before the seat of judicature, insinuating to the governors that these men were Jews, and sought to introduce different customs and ways of worship, contrary to the laws of the Roman empire. The magistrates and people were soon agreed, the one to give sentence, the other to set upon the execution. In fine, they were stript, beaten, and then commanded to be thrown into prison, and the gaoler charged to keep them with all possible care and strictness; who to make sure of his charge, thrust them into the inner dungeon, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But a good man can turn a prison into a chapel, and make a den of thieves to be a house of prayer. Our feet cannot be bound so fast to the earth but that still our hearts may mount up to heaven. At midnight the apostles were overheard by their fellow-prisoners, praying, and singing hymns to God. But after the still voice came the tempest. An earthquake suddenly shook the foundations of the prison, the doors flew open, and their chains fell off. The gaoler awaking with this amazing accident, concluded with himself that the prisoners were fled; and to prevent the sentence of public justice was going to lay violent hands upon himself; which St. Paul espying, called out to him to hold his hand, and told him they were all there. Who thereupon came in to them with a greater earthquake in his own conscience, and falling down before them, asked them, "What he should do to be saved?" They told him, there was no other way of salvation for him or his, than a hearty and sincere embracing of the faith of Christ. What a happy change does Christianity make in the minds of men. How plain does it smooth the roughest tempers, and instil the sweetest principles of civility and good-nature! He who a little before had tyrannized over the apostles with the most merciless and cruel usage, began now to treat them with all the arts of kindness and charity; bringing them out of the dungeon, and washing their stripes and wounds, and being more fully instructed in the principles of Christianity, was, together with his whole family, immediately baptized by them. Early in the morning the magistrates sent officers privately to release them;—which the apostles refused, telling them, that they were not only innocent persons, but Romans; that they had been illegally condemned and beaten; that therefore their delivery should be as public as the injury, and an open vindication of their innocence; and that they themselves, who had sent them thither, should fetch them thence. For the Roman government was very tender of the lives and liberties of its own subjects, those especially

that were free denizens of Rome; every injury offered to a Roman being looked upon as an affront against the majesty of the whole people of Rome.* Such a one might not be beaten; but to be scourged or bound, without being first legally heard and tried, was not only against the Roman, but the laws of all other nations;† and the more public any injury was, the greater was its aggravation; and the laws required a more strict and solemn reparation. St. Paul, who was a Roman, and very well understood the laws and privileges of Rome, insisted upon this, to the great startling and affrighting of the magistrates; who sensible of their error, came to the prison, and entreated them to depart. Whereupon going to Lydia's house, and having saluted and encouraged the brethren, they departed from that place.

5. Leaving Philippi, they came next to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, where Paul, according to his custom, presently went to the Jewish synagogue, for three Sabbath-days, reasoning and disputing with them;‡ proving from the predictions of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to suffer, and to rise again; and that the blessed Jesus was this Messiah. Great numbers, especially of religious proselytes, were converted by his preaching; while, like the sun which melts wax but hardens clay, it wrought quite a contrary effect in the unbelieving Jews, who presently set themselves to blow up the city into a tumult and an uproar, and missing St. Paul, (who had withdrawn himself,) they fell foul upon Jason, in whose house he lodged, representing to the magistrates that they were enemies to Cæsar, and sought to undermine the peace and prosperity of the Roman empire. At night Paul and Silas were conducted by the brethren to Berœa; where going to the synagogue, they found the people of a more noble and generous, a more pliable and ingenuous temper, ready to entertain the Christian doctrine, but yet not willing to take it merely upon the apostle's word, till they had first compared his preaching with what the Scriptures say of the Messiah and his doctrine. And the success was answerable in those great numbers that came over to them. But the Jewish malice pursued them still; for hearing at Thessalonica what entertainment they had found in this place, they presently came down to exasperate and stir up the people; to avoid

* "Ista laus primum majorum nostrorum, Quirites, qui lenitate legum vestram libertatem munitam esse voluerunt. Quamobrem inviolatum corpus omnium civium Romanorum integrum libertatis defendo servari oportere. Porcia lex virgas ab omnium civium Rom. corpore amovit. C. Gracchus legem tulit, ne de capite civium Rom. injussu vestro judicaretur.—Cic. Oratio pro C. Rabir. p. 314, tom. ii.

† L. 7, ff. de injuriis, lib. lxxix. tit. 10.

‡ Paul, by thus carefully avoiding giving the Jews cause of complaint against him, both acted in conformity with the spirit of our Lord's directions, and greatly furthered the object of his ministry. Had he been less wise, or less holy; had he been an impostor, or a fanatic, he would not have thus sought to diffuse the knowledge he had to impart through the acknowledged and legal channels of communication, but would have published at once, and with every species of popular art, his notions to the Gentiles.—Ed.

which, St. Paul, leaving Silas and Timothy behind him, thought good to withdraw himself from that place.

6. From Berea he went to Athens,* one of the most renowned cities in the world, excelling all others (says an ancient historian) in antiquity, humanity, and learning. Indeed it was the great seat of arts and learning; and as Cicero will have it, the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, arts, and laws, were derived into all other nations. So universally flocked to by all that had but the least kindness for the muses, or good manners, that he who had not seen Athens was accounted a block; he who having seen it and was not in love with it, a dull, stupid ass; and he who after he had seen it could be willing to leave it, fit for nothing to be but a pack-horse. Here among the several sets of philosophers, he had more particular contests with the Stoics and Epicureans, who beyond all the rest, seemed enemies to Christianity. The Epicureans, because they found their pleasure and jovial humor, and their loose and exorbitant course of life so much checked and controlled by the strict and severe precepts of Christ; and that Christianity so plainly and positively asserted a divine providence, that governs the world, and that will adjudge to men suitable rewards and punishments in another world. The Stoics, on the other hand, though pretending to principles of great and uncommon rigor and severity, and such as had nearest affinity to the doctrines of the Christian religion, yet found themselves aggrieved with it. That meek and humble temper of mind, that modesty and self-denial, which the gospel so earnestly recommends to us, and so strictly requires of us, being so directly contrary to the immoderate pride and ambition of that sect, who beyond all proportions of reason, were not ashamed to make their wise men equal to, and in some things to exceed God himself.†

7. While St. Paul staid at Athens, in expectation of Silas and Timothy to come to him, he went up and down to take a more curious view and survey of the city, which he found miserably overgrown with superstition and idolatry; as indeed Athens was noted by all their own writers for far greater numbers of deities and idols than all Greece besides. They were, as Strabo notes, not more fond of strangers and novelties in other things, than forward to comply with novelties in religion; ready to entertain any foreign deities and rites of worship; no divinity that was elsewhere adored coming amiss to them. Whence Athens is by one of their own orators styled, "the great sun and centre of piety and religion."

* Acts xvii. 15.

† "Tantum sapienti sua quantum deo omnis ætas patet. Est aliquid quo sapiens antecedit Deum. Ille nature beneficio non timet, suo sapiens. Ecce res magna, habere imbecillitatem hominis, securitatem Dei."—Senec. Epist. 53, p. 131. "Solebat Sextius dicere, Jovem plus non posse, quam bonum virum. Plura Jupiter habet, quæ præstat hominibus: sed inter duos bonos non est melior, qui locupletior. Jupiter quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est. Sapiens nihilo se minoris æstimat, quod virtutes ejus spatio brevior clauduntur."—Id. Epist. 37, p. 203.

And he there aggravates the impiety of Epicurus, in speaking unworthily and irreverently of the gods, from the place where he did it; at Athens, a place so pious, so devoted to them. Indeed herein justly commendable, that they could not brook the least dishonorable reflection upon any deity, and therefore Apollonius Tyaneus* tells Timasion, that the safest way was to speak well of all the gods; and especially at Athens, where altars were dedicated even to unknown gods. And so St. Paul here found it, for among the several shrines and places of worship and devotion, he took more particular notice of one altar inscribed to the unknown God. The entire inscription, whereof the apostle quotes only part of the last words, is thought to have been this:

ΘΕΟΙΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΙΒΥΡΗΣ ΘΕΩ.
ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΞΕΝΩ.

"TO THE GODS OF ASIA, EUROPE, AND AFRICA;
TO THE STRANGE AND UNKNOWN GOD."†

St. Jerome represents it in the same manner, only makes it gods, in the plural number; which, because, says he, St. Paul needed not, he only cited

* But this Apollonius, so celebrated in his times for the success with which he practised the arts of magic that he was set up by the pagans as the rival of Christ, has been shown to have clearly professed his belief in one mighty and mysterious Being, who created all things. The contradiction which existed between this notion, and that of the sentiment above stated, was only an apparent contradiction in the theology of the period, and was supposed to be fully explained by the reasonings of the philosophers. "The truth of this whole business," observes the venerable Cudworth, "seems to be this: that the ancient pagans did physiologize in their theology; and whether looking upon the whole world animated, as the supreme God, and consequently the several parts of it as his living members; or else, apprehending it at least to be a mirror or visible image of the invisible Deity, and consequently all its several parts and things of nature but so many several manifestations of the Divine power and providence: they pretended that all their devotion towards the Deity ought not to be huddled up in one general and confused acknowledgment of a supreme invisible Being, the Creator and Governor of all; but that all the several manifestations of the Deity in the world, considered singly and apart by themselves, should be made so many distinct objects of their devout veneration."—Intellectual System, Book I. chap. iv. p. 223, ed. 1743. The awful corruption which followed in the train of every mythological invention, proves the perfect falseness of this philosophic theory; the grand error of which seems to have been, that it confounded the will of Deity with the operations carried on by its energy; for each of the gods being evidently regarded as professing a distinct personality, must also have been considered to possess a distinct will; distinct in itself, however subjected occasionally to the greater power of the higher god or gods. From this variety of wills, existing in the variously exhibited and divided godhead, arose, we apprehend, all that confusion of principles, that dark cloud of enormous vice, which overspread the whole heathen world.—Ed.

† Oecumen. Schol. in Act. 17, p. 137.

it in the singular.* Which surely he affirms without any just ground and warrant; though it cannot be denied, but that heathen writers make frequent mention of the altars of unknown gods that were at Athens, as there want not others who speak of some erected there to an unknown God. This notion the Athenians might probably borrow from the Hebrews, who had the name of God in great secrecy and veneration. This being one of the titles given him by the prophet, "a hidden God, or a God that hides himself." Sure I am, that Justin Martyr tells us, that one of the principal names given to God by some of the heathens, was *Παγκρυφός*, "one altogether hidden." Hence, the Egyptians probably derived their great God Ammon, or more truly Amun, which signifies "occult," or "hidden." Accordingly, in this passage of St. Paul, the Syriac interpreter renders it, the "altar of the hidden God." The Jews were infinitely superstitious in concealing the name of God, not thinking it lawful ordinarily to pronounce it. This made the Gentiles, strangers at best both to the language and religion of the Jews, at a great loss by what name to call him; one styling him in general an "uncertain, unspeakable, invisible deity;" whence Caligula, in his ranting oration to the Jews, told them, that wretches as they were, though they refused to own him, whom all others had confessed to be a deity, yet they could worship *τον ακατανοητον υμιν*, "their own nameless God." And hence, the Gentiles derived their custom of keeping secret the name of their gods; thus Plutarch tells us of the tutelar deity of Rome, that it was not lawful to name it, or so much as to inquire what sex it was of, whether god or goddess; and that for once revealing it, Valerius Soranus, though tribune of the people, came to an untimely end, and was crucified; the vilest and most dishonorable kind of death. Whereof, among other reasons, he assigns this, that by concealing the author of their public safety, not he only, but all the other gods might have due honor and worship paid to them. Hence, in their public adorations, after the invocation of particular deities, they were wont to add some more general and comprehensive form, as when Cicero had been making his address to most of their particular gods, he concludes with a "*Ceteros item Deos, Deasque omnes imploro atque obtestor*." Usually the form was "*ΔΙ ΔΕΘΕΩΝ ΟΜΝΕΣ*." The reason whereof was this, that not being assured many times what that peculiar deity was, that was proper to their purpose, or what numbers of gods there were in the world, they would not affront or offend any, by seeming to neglect and pass them by. And this Chrysostom thinks to have been particularly designed in the erection of this Athenian altar, they were afraid lest there might be some other deity (besides those whom they particularly worshipped) as yet unknown to them, though honored and adored elsewhere; and therefore "for the more security," they dedicated an altar to the unknown god. As for the particular occasion of erecting

these altars at Athens, (omitting that of Pan's appearing to Philpides, mentioned by Oecumenius,) the most probable seems to be this. When a great plague raged at Athens, and several means had been attempted for the removal of it, they were advised by Epimenides the philosopher, to build an altar, and dedicate it "to the proper and peculiar deity to whom it did appertain," be he what he would. A course which, proving successful, no doubt gave occasion to them, by way of gratitude, to erect more shrines to this unknown God. And accordingly Laertius, who lived long after St. Paul's time, tells us that there were such nameless altars (he means such as were not inscribed to any particular deity) in and about Athens in his days, as monuments of that eminent deliverance.*

7. But whatever the particular cause might be, hence it was that St. Paul took occasion to discourse of the true, but to them unknown God. For the philosophers had before treated him with a great deal of scorn and derision, asking what that idle and prating fellow had to say to them? Others looking upon him as a propagator of new and strange gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the anastasis, or resurrection, which they looked upon as two upstart deities, lately come into the world. Hereupon they brought him to the place where stood the famous senate-house of the Areopagites; and according to the Athenian humor, which altogether delighted in curious novelties, running up and down the forum and places of public concourse to see any strange accident, or hear any new report, (a vice which their own great orator long since taxed them with,) they asked him, what that new and strange doctrine was which he preached to them? Whereupon, in a neat and elegant discourse he began to tell them, he had observed how much they were overrun with superstition;† that their zeal for religion was indeed generous and commendable, but which miserably over-shot its due measures and proportions; that he had taken notice of an altar among them inscribed, to the unknown God; and therefore, in compassion to their blind and misguided zeal, he would declare unto them the Deity which they ignorantly worshipped; and this was no other than the great God, the creator of all things, the supreme governor and ruler of the world, who was incapable of being confined within any temple or human fabric; that no image could be made as a proper instrument to represent him; that he needed no gifts or sacrifices, being

* Cudworth (Intellect. Sys. b. 1, c. 4.) quotes from Lucian's Dialogue, Philopatzes, to illustrate this point, the expression of Critias: "No, by the unknown god of Athens;" and this of Triephon: *Ἡμεῖς δε τον εν Ἀθηναις Ἀγνωστον εφευροντες κει προσκυνησαντες, χειρας εις θρανον εκτειναντες, τουτω ευχαριστησομεν, ως ταταζωμεντες, &c.* "But we, having found out that unknown god at Athens, and worshipped him with hands stretched up to heaven, will give thanks to him, as having been thought worthy to be made subject to this power."—ED.

† The word *Δαισιδαμων*, here translated superstition, was used by the apostle in its best, or mildest sense; in which manner it is found employed by many heathen authors. Com. in Act. Apos. Poli Synopsis. i. h. 1.—ED.

* It is supposed by some learned authors that the plural might be used, not to express that there were altars to many unknown gods, but that there were many altars to the one.—ED.

himself the fountain, from whence life, breath, and all other blessings were derived to particular beings: that from one common original he had made the whole race of mankind; and had wisely fixed and determined the times and bounds of their habitation; and all to this end, that men might be the stronglier obliged to seek after him, and sincerely to serve and worship him. A duty which they might easily attain to, (though otherwise sunk into the deepest degeneracy, and overspread with the grossest darkness,) he every where affording such palpable evidences of his own being and providence, that he seemed to stand near and touch us; it being entirely from him that we derive our life, motion, and subsistence. A thing acknowledged even by their own poet, that "we also are his offspring." If, therefore, God was our creator, it was highly unreasonable to think that we could make any image or representation of him: that it was too long already, that the divine patience had borne with the manners of men, and suffered them to go on in their blind idolatries; that now he expected a general repentance and reformation from the world, especially having, by the publishing of his gospel, put out of all dispute the case of a future judgment, and particularly appointed the Holy Jesus to be the person that should sentence and judge the world: by whose resurrection he had given sufficient evidence and assurance of it. No sooner had he mentioned the resurrection, but some of the philosophers (no doubt Epicureans, who were wont to laugh at the notion of a future state) mocked and derided him; others more gravely answered, that they would hear him again concerning this matter. But his discourse, however scorned and slighted, did not wholly want its desired effect, and that upon some of the greatest quality and rank among them. In the number of whom was Dionysius, one of the grave senators and judges of the Areopagus; and Damarius, whom the ancients not improbably make his wife.

8. This Dionysius was bred at Athens, in all the learned arts and sciences: at five-and-twenty years of age he is said to have travelled into Egypt, to perfect himself in the study of astrology; for which that nation had the credit and renown. Here beholding the miraculous eclipse that was at the time of our Saviour's passion, he concluded that some great accident must needs be coming upon the world. Returning to Athens, he became one of the senators of the Areopagus, disputed with St. Paul, and was by him converted from his errors and idolatry; and being thoroughly instructed, was by him (as the ancients inform us) made the first bishop of Athens. As for those that tell us, that he went afterwards into France, by the direction of Clemens of Rome, planted Christianity at, and became bishop of Paris; of his suffering martyrdom there under Domitian, his carrying his head for the space of two miles in his hand, after it had been cut off, and the rest of his miracles done before and after his death, I have as little leisure to inquire into them as I have faith to believe them. Indeed, the foundation of all is justly denied; viz., that ever he was there, a thing never heard of till the times of Charles the Great; though since that, volumes have been written of this controversy, both heretofore and of later

times; among which, J. Sirmondus, the Jesuit, and Monsieur Launoy, one of the learned doctors of the Sorbon, have unanswerably proved the Athenian and Parisian Dyonisius to be distinct persons. For the books that go under his name, M. Daille has sufficiently evinced them to be of a date many hundred years younger than St. Denys;* though I doubt not but they may claim a greater antiquity than what he allows them. But whoever was their author, I am sure Suidas has overstretched the praise of them beyond all proportion, when he gives them this character, "that whoever considers the elegance of his discourses, and the profoundness of his notions and speculations, must needs conclude that they are not the issue of any human understanding, but of some divine and immaterial power." But to return to our apostle.

SECTION IV.

Of St. Paul's acts at Corinth and Ephesus.

AFTER his departure from Athens,† he went to Corinth, the metropolis of Greece, and the residence of the proconsul of Achaia; where he found Aquila and Priscilla lately come from Italy, banished out of Rome by the decree of Claudius; and they being of the same trade and profession wherein he had been educated in his youth, he wrought together with them, lest he should be unnecessarily burthensome unto any, which for the same reason he did in some other places. Hither, after some time, Silas and Timothy came to him. In the synagogue he frequently disputed with the Jews and proselytes, reasoning and proving, that Jesus was the true Messiah. They, according to the nature of the men, made head and opposed him; and what they could not conquer by argument and force of reason, they endeavored to carry by noise and clamor, mixed with blasphemies and revilings, the last refuges of an impotent and baffled cause. Whereat to testify his resentment, he shook his garments and told them, since he saw them resolved to pull down vengeance and destruction upon their own heads, he for his part was guiltless and innocent, and would henceforth address himself unto the Gentiles. Accordingly he left them, and went into the house of Justus, a religious proselyte, where, by his preaching and the many miracles which he wrought, he converted great numbers to the faith. Amongst which were Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Gains and Stephanus, who, together with their families, embraced the doctrine of the gospel, and were baptized into the Christian faith. But the constant returns of malice and ingratitude are

* Dupin has entered at full into the examination of these supposed works of Dionysius the Areopagite; and concludes that they were most probably forged towards the close of the fifth, or at the beginning of the sixth century; that it is certain they were written since the fourth century, and before the middle of the sixth; while the intentional forgery is made plain by the author's evidently affecting to have lived in the apostolic age. *Biblioth. Pat.* vol. i. p. 36.—Ed.

† Acts xviii. 1.

enough to tire the largest charity, and cool the most generous resolution. Therefore, that the apostle might not be discouraged by the restless attempts and machinations of his enemies, our Lord appeared to him in a vision, told him that notwithstanding the bad success he had hitherto met with, there was a great harvest to be gathered in that place; that he should not be afraid of his enemies, but go on to preach confidently and securely, for that he himself would stand by him and preserve him.

2. About this time,* as is most probable, he wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians; Silas and Timothy being lately returned from thence, and having done the message for which he had sent them thither. The main design of the epistle is to confirm them in the belief of the Christian religion, and that they would persevere in it, notwithstanding all the afflictions and persecutions which he had told them would ensue upon their profession of the gospel, and to instruct them in the main duties of a Christian and religious life. While the apostle was thus employed, the malice of the Jews was no less at work against him; and universally combining together, they brought him before Gallio, the proconsul of the province, elder brother to the famous Seneca; before him they accused the apostle as an innovator in religion, that sought to introduce a new way of worship, contrary to what was established by the Jewish law, and permitted by the Roman powers. The apostle was ready to have pleaded his own cause, but the proconsul told them, that had it been a matter of right or wrong, that had fallen under the cognizance of the civil judicature, it had been very fit and reasonable that he should have heard and determined the case; but since the controversy was only concerning the punctilios and niceties of their religion, it was very improper for him to be a judge in such matters. And when they still clamored about it, he threw out their indictment, and commanded his officers to drive them out of court. Whereupon some of the townsmen seized upon Sosthenes, one of the rulers of the Jewish consistory, a man active and busy in this insurrection, and beat him even before the court of judicature, the proconsul not at all concerning himself about it. A year and a half St. Paul continued in this place, and before his departure thence, wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, to supply the want of his coming to them, which in his former he had resolved on, and for which, in a manner, he had engaged his promise. In this, therefore, he endeavors again to confirm their minds in the truth of the gospel, and that they would not be shaken with those troubles which the wicked unbelieving Jews would not cease to create them; a lost and undone race of men, and whom the divine vengeance was ready finally to overtake. And because some passages in his former letter, relating to this destruction, had been misunderstood, as if this day of the Lord were just then at hand, he rectifies those mistakes, and shows what must precede our Lord's coming unto judgment.

3. St. Paul having thus fully planted and culti-

vated the church at Corinth, resolved now for Syria.* And taking along with him Aquila and Priscilla, at Cenchrea, the port and harbor of Corinth, Aquila (for of him it is certainly to be understood) shaved his head, in performance of a Nazarite vow he had formerly made, the time whereof was now run out. In his passage into Syria he came to Ephesus, where he preached awhile in the synagogue of the Jews. And though desired to stay with them, yet having resolved to be at Jerusalem at the passover, (probably that he might have the fitter opportunity to meet his friends, and preach the gospel to those vast numbers that usually flocked to that great solemnity,) he promised that in his return he would come again to them. Sailing thence, he landed at Cæsarea, and thence went up to Jerusalem; where having visited the church, and kept the feast, he went down to Antioch. Here having staid some time, he traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming, as he went, the new-converted Christians, and so came to Ephesus; where finding certain Christian disciples, he inquired of them, whether, since their conversion, they had received the miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost.† They told him, that the doctrine which they had received had nothing in it of that nature, nor had they ever heard that any such extraordinary spirit had of late been bestowed upon the church. Hereupon he further inquired unto what they had been baptized? the (Christian baptism being administered in the name of the Holy Ghost.) They answered, they had received no more than John's baptism; which though it obliged men to repentance, yet did it explicitly speak nothing of the Holy Ghost, or its gifts and powers. To this the apostle replied, that though John's baptism did openly oblige to nothing but repentance, yet that it did implicitly acknowledge the whole doctrine concerning Christ and the Holy Ghost. Whereunto they assenting, were solemnly initiated by Christian baptism, and the apostle laying his hands upon them, they immediately received the Holy Ghost, in the gift of tongues, prophecy, and other miraculous powers conferred upon them.

4. After this he entered into the Jewish synagogues, where for the first three months he contended and disputed with the Jews, endeavoring with great earnestness and resolution to convince them of the truth of those things that concerned the Christian religion. But when, instead of success, he met with nothing but refractoriness and infidelity, he left the synagogue, and taking those with him whom he had converted, instructed them, and others that resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus, a place where scholars were wont to be educated and instructed.‡ In this manner he continued for two years together; in which time the Jews and proselytes of the whole proconsular Asia

* Acts xviii. 18.

† Acts xix. 1.

‡ Some commentators have conjectured that Tyrannus was a title, not a name; but there appears no sufficient ground for this supposition. He is generally believed to have been the master of one of those schools which were common among the Jews, and were instituted for private instruction, as those over which the rabbis, or a consistory presided, were for the teaching of the law in a more public way.—Ed.

* That is, at the close of the year 51, or the beginning of the following year.—Ed.

had opportunity of having the gospel preached to them. And because miracles are the clearest evidence of a divine commission, and the most immediate credentials of heaven, those which do nearest affect our senses, and consequently have the strongest influence upon our minds, therefore God was pleased to ratify the doctrine which St. Paul delivered by great and miraculous operations; and those of somewhat a more peculiar and extraordinary nature. Inasmuch that he did not only heal those that came to him, but if napkins or handkerchiefs were but touched by him, and applied unto the sick, their diseases immediately vanished, and the demons and evil spirits departed out of those that were possessed by them.

5. Ephesus, above all other places in the world, was noted of old for the study of magic, and all secret and hidden arts, whence the *Ἐφεσίου γράμματα* so often spoken of by the ancients, which were certain obscure and mystical spells and charms, by which they endeavored to heal diseases and drive away evil spirits, and do things beyond the reach and apprehensions of common people.* Besides other professors of this black art, there were at this time at Ephesus certain Jews, who dealt in the arts of exorcism and incantation; a craft and mystery which Josephus† affirms to have been derived from Solomon;‡ who, he tells us, did not only find it out, but composed forms of exorcism and enchantment, whereby to cure diseases, and expel demons, so as they should never return again; and adds, "that this art was still in force among the Jews;" instances wecroof, he tells us, he himself had seen, having beheld one Eleazar, a Jew, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, and the great officers of his army, curing demoniacs, by holding a ring to their nose, under whose seal was hid the root of a certain plant, prescribed by Solomon, at the scent whereof the demon presently took leave and was gone, the patient falling to the ground, while the exorcist, by mentioning Solomon, and reciting some charms made by him, stood over

him, and charged the evil spirit never to return. And to let them see that he was really gone, he commanded the demon, as he went out, to overturn a cup full of water, which he had caused to be set in the room before them. In the number of these conjurers now at Ephesus, there were the seven sons of Sceva, one of the chief heads of the families of the priests, who seeing what great things were done by calling over demoniacs the name of Christ, attempted themselves to do the like, conjuring the evil spirit in the name of that Jesus, whom Paul preached, to depart. But the stubborn demon would not obey the warrant, telling them, he knew who Jesus and Paul were, but did not understand what authority they had to use his name. And not content with this, forced the demoniac violently to fall upon them, to tear their clothes, and wound their bodies; scarce suffering them to escape with the safety of their lives. An accident that begot great terror in the minds of men, and became the occasion of converting many to the faith; who came to the apostle, and confessed the former course and manner of their lives. Several also, who had traded in curious arts, and the mysterious methods of spells and charms, freely brought their books of magic rites, (whose price, had they been to be sold, according to the rates which men who dealt in those cursed mysteries put upon them, would have amounted to the value of above one thousand five hundred pounds,* and openly burnt them before the people; themselves adjudging them to those flames to which they were condemned by the laws of the empire.† For so we find the Roman laws prohibiting any to keep books of magic arts, and that where any such were found, their goods should be forfeited, the books publicly burned, the persons banished; and if of a meaner rank, beheaded. These books the penitent converts did of their own accord sacrifice to the fire, not tempted to spare them either by their former love to them, or the present price and value of them. With so mighty an efficacy did the gospel prevail over the minds of men.

6. About this time it was that the apostle writ his epistle to the Galatians. For he had heard that since his departure, corrupt opinions had got in amongst them about the necessary observation of the legal rites; and that several impostors were crept into that church, who knew no better way to undermine the doctrine he had planted there, than by vilifying his person, slighting him as an apostle only at the second hand, not to be compared with Peter, James, and John, who had familiarly conversed with Christ in the days of his flesh, and been immediately deputed by him. In this epistle, therefore, he reproves them with some necessary smartness and severity, that they had been so soon led out of that right way wherein he had set them, and had so easily suffered themselves to be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of seducers. He vindicates the honor of his apos-

* Much curious learning has been employed in the examinations of this subject. The Ephesian incantations, are alluded to as a proverb by Menander; and the Ephesian letters, appear to have been six mystical words, which being bound on some part of the person, in a similar manner probably as the phylacteries of the Jews, were considered a sufficient protection against harm. The names of these letters were:—1. Askion; 2. Kataskion; 3. Lin; 4. Tetras; 5. Damnamenens; 6. Asion; the signification of which was said to be:—darkness, light, the earth, the year, the sun, and truth. Combatants in the public games were accustomed to wear these charms about them as a means of strength.—Ed.

† Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 2, p. 257.

‡ Solomon might have imbibed a love of magical arts from some of the heathen women, who blinded his understanding in so many other respects; or the extensive knowledge of nature which he possessed might, among an uneducated people, have led to the notion of his using incantations; as was the case with the scholars and philosophers who advanced beyond their cotemporaries in the middle ages. But there is no room for believing that the enchantments practised by the Jewish exorcists had their origin with the son of David, whose name was probably only used to give dignity and authority to the art.—Ed.

* Acts xix. 19.

† But reckoning the pieces of silver as Jewish shekels, at three shillings each, the value usually assigned them, the sum was seven thousand five hundred pounds; or if, as some authors think, the Roman sesterius was meant, the value of the books was only a little more than four hundred pounds.—Ed.

tolate, and the immediate receiving his commission from Christ, wherein he shows, that he came not behind the very best of those apostles. He largely refutes those judaical opinions that had tainted and infected them, and in the conclusion instructs them in the rules and duties of a holy life. While the apostle thus stayed at Ephesus, he resolved with himself to pass through Macedonia and Achaia, thence to Jerusalem, and so to Rome. But for the present altered his resolution, and continued still at Ephesus.

7. During his stay in this place, an accident happened, that involved him in great trouble and danger. Ephesus, above all the cities of the east, was renowned for the famous temple of Diana, one of the stateliest temples of the world. It was (as Pliny tells us) the very wonder of magnificence, built at the common charges of all Asia properly so called, two hundred and twenty years (elsewhere he says four hundred) in building, which we are to understand of its successive rebuildings and reparations, being often wasted and destroyed. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty broad, supported by one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, sixty feet high; for its antiquity, it was in some degree before the times of Bacchus, equal to the Amazons, (by whom it is generally said to have been first built,) as the Ephesian ambassadors told Tiberius, till by degrees it grew up into that greatness and splendor, that it was generally reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world. But that which gave the greatest fame and reputation to it, was an image of Diana kept there, made of no very costly materials, but which the crafty priests persuaded the people was beyond all human artifice or contrivement; and that it was immediately formed by Jupiter, and dropped down from heaven; having first killed, or banished the artists that made it, (as Suidas informs us,) that the cheat might not be discovered; by which means they drew not Ephesus only, but the whole world into a mighty veneration of it. Besides there were within this temple multitudes of silver cabinets, or chapelets, little shrines, made in fashion of the temple, wherein was placed the image of Diana. For the making of these holy shrines, great numbers of silversmiths were employed and maintained; among whom one Demetrius was a leading man, who foreseeing that if the Christian religion still got ground, their gainful trade would soon come to nothing, presently called together the men of his profession, especially those whom he himself set on work; told them, that now their welfare and livelihood were concerned, and that the fortunes of their wives and children lay at stake; that it was plain that this Paul had perverted city and country, and persuaded the people that the images which they made and worshipped were no real gods; by which means their trade was not only like to fall to the ground, but also the honor and magnificence of the great goddess Diana, whom not Asia only, but the whole world did worship and adore. Enraged with this discourse, they cried out with one voice, that "Great was Diana of the Ephesians." The whole city was presently in an uproar, and seizing upon two of St. Paul's companions, they hurried them into the theatre, probably with a design to

have cast them to the wild beasts. St. Paul hearing of their danger, would have ventured himself among them, had not the Christians, nay, some even of the Gentile priests, governors of the popular games and sports earnestly dissuaded him from it; well knowing that the people were resolved, if they could meet with him, to throw him to the wild beasts, that were kept there for the disport and pleasure of the people. And this doubtless he means, when elsewhere he tells us, that "he fought with beasts at Ephesus:"* probably intending what the people designed, though he did not actually suffer; though the brutish rage, the savage and inhuman manners of this people did sufficiently deserve that the censure and character should be fixed upon themselves.

8. Great was the confusion of the multitude, the major part not knowing the reason of the course: in which distraction Alexander, a Jewish convert, being thrust forward by the Jews, to be questioned and examined about this matter, he would accordingly have made his apology to the people, intending no doubt to clear himself by casting the whole blame upon St. Paul; this being, very probably, that Alexander the coppersmith, of whom our apostle elsewhere complains, "that he did him much evil, and greatly withstood his words;"† and "whom he delivered over unto Satan" for his apostacy, for blaspheming Christ, and reproaching Christianity. But the multitude perceiving him to be a Jew, and thereby suspecting him to be one of St. Paul's associates, began to raise an outcry for near two hours together, wherein nothing could be heard, but "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The noise being a little over, the recorder, a discreet and prudent man, came out and calmly told them, that it was sufficiently known to all the world, what a mighty honor and veneration the city of Ephesus had for the great goddess Diana, and the famous image which fell from heaven, that therefore there needed not this stir to vindicate and assert it; that they had seized persons who were not guilty either of sacrilege or blasphemy towards their goddess; that if Demetrius and his company had any just charge against them, the courts were sitting, and they might prefer their indictment; or if the controversy were about any other matter, it might be referred to such a proper judicature as the law appoints for the determination of such cases; that therefore they should do well to be quiet, having done more already than they could answer, if called in question, (as it is like they would,) there being no cause sufficient to justify that day's riotous assembly. With which prudent discourse he appeased and dismissed the multitude.

9. It was about this time that St. Paul heard of some disturbance in the church at Corinth, hatched and fomented by a pack of false, heretical teachers, crept in among them, who endeavored to draw them into parties and factions, by persuading one party to be for Peter, another for Paul, a third for Apollos; as if the main of religion consisted in being of this or that denomination, or in a warm active zeal to decry and oppose whoever is not of our narrow sect. It is a very weak and slender claim, when a man holds his religion

* 1 Cor. xv.

† 2 Tim. iv. 14; 1 Tim. i. 20.

by no better a title than that he has joined himself to this man's church, or that man's congregation, and is zealously earnest to maintain and promote it; to be childishly and passionately clamorous for one man's mode and way of administration, or for some particular humor or opinion; as if religion lay in nice and curious disputes, or in separating from our brethren, and not rather "in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." By this means schisms and factions broke into the Corinthian church, whereby many wild and extravagant opinions, and some of them such as undermined the fundamental articles of Christianity, were planted, and had taken root there. As the envious man never fishes more successfully than in troubled waters. To cure these distempers St. Paul (who had received an account of all these by letters which Apollos and some others had brought to him from the church of Corinth) writes his first epistle to them; wherein he smartly reproves them for their schisms and parties, conjures them to peace and unity, corrects those gross corruptions that were introduced among them, and particularly resolves those many cases and controversies wherein they had requested his advice and council. Shortly after Apollos designing to go for Crete, by him and Zenas St. Paul sends his epistle to Titus, whom he made bishop of that island, and had left there for the propagating of the gospel. Herein he fully instructs him in the execution of his office, how to carry himself, and what directions he should give others, to all particular ranks and relations of men, especially those who were to be advanced to places of office and authority in the church.

10. A little before St. Paul's departure from Ephesus, we may not improbably suppose, that Apollonius Tyaneus, the famous philosopher and magician of the heathen world, (a man remarkable for the strictness of his manners, and his sober and regular course of life, but especially for the great miracles said to have been done by him; whom therefore the heathens generally set up as the great co-rival of our Saviour: though some of his own party, and particularly Euphratus* the philosopher, who lived with him at the same time at Rome, accused him for doing his strange feats by magic) came to Ephesus. The enemy of mankind probably designing to obstruct the propagation of Christianity, by setting up one who by the arts of magic might, at least in the vogue and estimation of the people, equal, or eclipse the miracles of S. Paul. Certain it is, if we compare times and actions set down by the writer of

his life, we shall find that he came hither about the beginning of Nero's reign; and he particularly sets down the strange things that were done by him, especially his clearing the city of a grievous plague; for which the people of Ephesus had him in such veneration, that they erected a statue to him as to a particular deity, and did divine honor to it. But whether this was before St. Paul's going thence, I will not take upon me to determine; it seems most propable to have been done afterwards.

SECTION V.

St. Paul's acts, from his departure from Ephesus till his arraignment before Felix.

It was not long after the tumult at Ephesus, when St. Paul having called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of that place, took his leave, and departed by Troas for Macedonia. And at this time it was, that, as he himself tells us, he "preached the gospel round about unto Illyricum,"* since called Sclavonia, some parts of Macedonia bordering on that province. From Macedonia, he returned back unto Greece, where he abode three months, and met with Titus, lately come with great contributions from the church at Corinth. By whose example he stirred up the liberality of the Macedonians, who very freely, and somewhat beyond their ability, contributed to the poor Christians at Jerusalem. From Titus he had an account of the present state of the church at Corinth; and by him at his return, together with St. Luke, he sent his second epistle to them. Wherein he endeavors to set right what his former epistle had not yet effected; to vindicate his apostleship from that contempt and scorn, and himself from those slanders and aspersions, which the seducers, who had found themselves lashed by his first epistle, had cast upon him, together with some other particular cases relating to them.—Much about the same time† he writ his first epistle to Timothy, whom he had left at Ephesus, wherein at large he counsels him how to carry himself in the discharge of that great place and authority in the church, which he had committed to him; instructs him in the particular qualifications of those whom he should make choice of, to be bishops and ministers in the church; how to

The heathen writer, Mæragenes, does not simply call him a magician, but accuses him of practising arts that were infamous and diabolical; which scarcely agrees with our author's panegyrical expressions, evidently founded on his history by Philostratus; from which, however, Eusebius did by no means draw a similar conclusion, for he says, it will of itself afford sufficient proof that Apollonius was so far from deserving to be compared with our Lord, that he did not deserve to be ranked with even moderately honest men.—Ed.

* Acts xx. 1.

† That is, about the year 57; but this date is strongly objected to by many critics, who think there is sufficient internal evidence to prove that the epistle was written subsequently to the apostle's imprisonment at Rome or as late as the year 64.—Ed.

* Euseb. lib. iv. contra Hierocl. p. 530, ad calc. Demonstr. Evang.

Lardner observes on a passage in Cudworth, which nearly agrees with the words of our author, that he cannot assent to the opinion it conveys, though he believes it to be that of many other learned men: "With due submission," says he, "I do not think that Apollonius was a man of so great importance as is here supposed; for it does not appear that any adversaries of the Christians, either Celsus or Porphyry, or any other, before Hierocles, at the beginning of the fourth century, under Dioclesian's persecution, ever took any notice of him in any of their arguments."—Works, vol. viii. p. 261.

order the deaconesses, and to instruct servants; warning him withal of that pestilent generation of heretics and seducers that would arise in the church. During his three months' stay in Greece, he went to Corinth, whence he wrote his famous epistle to the Romans, which he sent by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, nigh Corinth; wherein his main design is fully to state and determine the great controversy between the Jews and Gentiles, about the obligation of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, and those main and material doctrines of Christianity, which did depend upon it, such as of Christian liberty, the use of indifferent things, &c. And which is the main end of all religion, instructs them in, and presses them to the duties of a holy and good life, such as the Christian doctrine does naturally tend to oblige men to.

2. St. Paul being now resolved for Syria, to convey the contributions to the brethren at Jerusalem, was awhile diverted from that resolution, by a design he was told of which the Jews had to kill and rob him by the way. Whereupon he went back into Macedonia, and so came to Philippi, and thence went to Troas; where having stayed a week, on the Lord's-day, the church met together to receive the holy sacrament. Here St. Paul preached to them, and continued his discourse till midnight, the longer probably, being the next day to depart from them. The length of his discourse, and the time of the night, had caused some of his auditors to be overtaken with sleep and drowsiness, among whom a young man called Eutychus being fast asleep, fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead, but whom St. Paul presently restored to life and health. How indefatigable was the industry of our apostle; how close did he tread in his master's steps, who "went about doing good." He compassed sea and land, preached and wrought miracles wherever he came. In every place, like a wise master-builder he either laid a foundation, or raised the superstructure. He was "instant in season and out of season," and spared not his pains, either night or day, that he might do good to the souls of men.—The night being thus spent in holy exercises, St. Paul in the morning took his leave, and went on foot to Assos, a sea-port town, whither he had sent his company by sea. Thence they set sail to Mitylene; from thence to Samos, and having stayed some little time at Trogyllium, the next day came to Miletus, not so much as putting in at Ephesus, because the apostle was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost.

3. At Miletus he sent to Ephesus,* to summon the bishops and governors of the church, who being come, he put them in mind with what uprightness and integrity, with what affection and humility, with how great trouble and danger, with how much faithfulness to their souls he had been conversant among them, and had preached the gospel to them, ever since his first coming into those parts; that he had not failed to acquaint them, both publicly and privately, with whatever might be useful and profitable to them, urging, both upon Jews and Gentiles, repentance and reformation of

life, and a hearty entertainment of the faith of Christ; that now he was resolved to go to Jerusalem, where he did not know what particular sufferings would befall him, more than this, that it had been foretold him in every place by those who were endued with the prophetic gifts of the Holy Ghost, that afflictions and imprisonment would attend him there; but that he was not troubled at this, no, nor unwilling to lay down his life, so he might but successfully preach the gospel, and faithfully serve his Lord in that place and station wherein he had set him; that he knew that henceforth they should see his face no more; but that this was his encouragement and satisfaction, that they themselves could bear him witness that he had not, by concealing from them any parts of the Christian doctrine, betrayed their souls; that as for themselves, whom God had made bishops and pastors of his church, they should be careful to feed, guide, and direct those Christians under their inspection, and be infinitely tender of the good of souls, for whose redemption Christ laid down his own life; that all the care they could use was no more than necessary, it being certain, that after his departure, heretical teachers would break in among them, and endanger the ruin of men's souls; nay, that even among themselves, there would some arise, who by subtle and crafty methods, by corrupt and pernicious doctrines would gain proselytes to their party, and thereby make rents and schisms in the church; that therefore they should watch, remembering with what tears and sorrow he had, for three years together, warned them of these things; that now he recommended them to the divine care and goodness, and to the rules and instructions of the gospel, which if adhered to, would certainly dispose and perfect them for that state of happiness which God had prepared for good men in heaven. In short, that as he had all along dealt faithfully and uprightly with them, they might know from hence, that in all his preaching he had no crafty or covetous designs upon any man's estate or riches; having (as themselves could witness) industriously labored with his own hands, and by his own work maintained both himself and his company; herein leaving them an example, what pains they ought to take to support the weak, and relieve the poor, rather than to be themselves chargeable unto others; according to that incomparable saying of our Saviour, (which surely St. Paul had received from some of those that had conversed with him in the days of the flesh,) "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This *concio ad clerum*, or visitation sermon being ended, the apostle kneeled down, and concluded all with prayer. Which done, they all melted into tears, and with the greatest expressions of sorrow attended him to the ship, though that which made the deepest impression upon their minds was, that he had told them, "that they should see his face no more."

4. Departing from Miletus, they arrived at Cos, thence came to Rhodes, thence to Patara, thence to Tyre;* where meeting with some Christians, he was advised by those among them who had the gift of prophecy, that he should not go up to

* Acts xxi. 17.

* Acts xxi. 1.

Jerusalem; with them he staid a week, and then going all together to the shore, he kneeled down and prayed with them; and having mutually embraced one another, he went on board, and came to Ptolemais, where only saluting the brethren, they came next day unto Cæsarea. Here they lodged in the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons that were at first set apart by the apostles, who had four virgin daughters, all endued with the gift of prophecy. During their stay in this place, Agabus, a Christian prophet, came down hither from Judæa, who taking Paul's girdle, bound with it his own hands and feet, telling them, that by this external symbol the Holy Ghost did signify and declare, that St. Paul should be thus served by the Jews at Jerusalem, and be by them delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles. Whereupon they all passionately besought him that he would divert his course to some other place. The apostle asked them what they meant by these compassionate dissuaves to add more affliction to his sorrow; that he was willing and resolved not only to be imprisoned; but, if need were, to die at Jerusalem for the sake of Christ and his religion. Finding his resolution fixed and immovable, they importuned him no further, but left the event to the divine will and pleasure. All things being in readiness, they set forwards on their journey; and being come to Jerusalem, were kindly and joyfully entertained by the Christians there.

5. The next day after their arrival, St. Paul and his company went to the house of St. James the apostle, where the rest of the bishops and governors of the church were met together;* after mutual salutations, he gave them a particular account with what success God had blessed him in propagating Christianity among the Gentiles; for which they all heartily blessed God; but withal told him that he was now come to a place where there were many thousands of Jewish converts, who all retained a mighty zeal and veneration for the law of Moses; and who had been informed of him, that he taught the Jews, whom he had converted in every place, to renounce circumcision and the ceremonies of the law; that as soon as the multitude heard of his arrival, they would come together to see how he behaved himself in this matter; and therefore to prevent so much disturbance, it was advisable that, there being four men there at that time who were to accomplish a vow, (probably not the Nazarite vow, but some other, which they had made for deliverance from sickness, or some other imminent danger and distress, for so Josephus tells us† they were wont to do in such cases, and before they came to offer the accustomed sacrifices, to abstain for some time from wine, and to shave their heads,) he should join himself to them, perform the usual rites and ceremonies with them, and provide such sacrifices for them as the law required in that case; and that, in discharge of their vow, they might shave their heads; whereby it would appear, that the reports which were spread concerning him were false and groundless, and that he himself did still observe the rites and orders of the Mosaic institution; that as for the Gentile converts, they required no

such observances at their hands, nor expected any thing more from them in these indifferent matters, than what had been before determined by the apostolical synod in that place. St. Paul (who in such things was willing "to become all things to all men, that he might gain the more") consented to the counsel which they gave him; and taking the persons along with him to the temple, told the priests that the time of a vow which they had made being now run out, and having purified themselves, as the nature of the case required, they were come to make their offerings according to the law.

6. The seven days wherein those sacrifices were to be offered being now almost ended, some Jews that were come from Asia, (where, probably, they had opposed St. Paul,) now finding him in the temple, began to raise a tumult and uproar; and laying hold of him, called out to the rest of the Jews for their assistance; telling them, that this was the fellow that every where vented doctrines derogatory to the prerogative of the Jewish nation, destructive to the institutions of the law, and to the purity of that place, which he had profaned by bringing in uncircumcised Greeks into it; positively concluding, that because they had seen Trophimus, a Gentile convert of Ephesus with him in the city, therefore he had brought him also into the temple. So apt is malice to make any premises from whence it may infer its own conclusion. Hereupon the whole city was presently in an uproar, and seizing upon him, they dragged him out of the temple, the doors being presently shut against him. Nor had they failed there to put a period to all his troubles, had not Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the tower of Antonia, come in with some soldiers to his rescue and deliverance; and supposing him to be a more than ordinary malefactor, commanded a double chain to be put upon him, though as yet altogether ignorant, either who he, or what his crime was, and wherein he could receive little satisfaction from the clamorous multitude, who called for nothing but his death, following the cry with such crowds and numbers that the soldiers were forced to take him into their arms, to secure him from the present rage and violence of the people. As they were going up into the castle, St. Paul asked the governor whether he might have the liberty to speak to him, who finding him to speak Greek, inquired of him whether he was not that Egyptian which a few years before had raised a sedition in Judæa, and headed a party of four thousand debauched and profligate wretches. The apostle replied, that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a freeman of a rich and honorable city, and therefore begged of him, that he might have leave to speak to the people; which the captain readily granted: and standing near the door of the castle, and making signs that they would hold their peace, he began to address himself to them in the Hebrew language: which when they heard they became a little more calm and quiet, while he discoursed to them to this effect.

7. He gave them an account of himself from his birth; of his education in his youth, of the mighty zeal which he had for the rites and customs of their religion, and with what a passionate earnestness he persecuted and put to death all the

* Acts xxi. 18.

† De Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 15.

Christians that he met with, whereof the high-priest and the Sanhedrim could be sufficient witnesses.* He next gave them an entire and punctual relation of the way and manner of his conversion; and how that he had received an immediate command from God himself to depart Jerusalem, and preach unto the Gentiles. At this word the patience of the Jews could hold no longer, but they unanimously cried out to have him put to death, it not being fit that such a villain should live upon the earth. And the more to express their fury, they threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, as if they immediately designed to stone him; to avoid which the captain of the guard commanded him to be brought within the castle, and that he should be examined by whipping, till he confessed the reason of so much rage against him. While the lictor was binding him in order to it, he asked the centurion that stood by, whether they could justify the scourging a citizen of Rome, and that before any sentence legally passed upon him? This the centurion presently intimated to the governor of the castle, bidding him have a care what he did for the prisoner was a Roman. Whereat the governor himself came, and asked him, whether he was a free denizen of Rome; and being told that he was, he replied, that it was a great privilege, a privilege which he himself had purchased at a considerable rate. To whom St. Paul answered, that it was his birth-right, and the privilege of the place where he was born and bred.† Hereupon they gave over their design of whipping him; the commander himself being a little startled, that he had bound and chained a denizen of Rome.

8. The next day the governor ordered his chains to be knocked off; and that he might thoroughly satisfy himself in the matter, commanded the Sanhedrim to meet, and brought down Paul before them: were being set before the council, he told them, that in all passages of his life he had been careful to act according to the severest rules and conscience of his duty. "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."‡ Behold here the great security of a good man, and what invisible supports innocence affords under the greatest danger! With how generous a confidence does virtue and honesty guard the breast of a good man! as indeed nothing else can lay a firm basis and foundation for satisfaction and tranquillity, when any misery or calamity does overtake us. Religion and a good conscience beget peace and a heaven in the man's bosom, beyond the power of the little accidents of this world to ruffle and discompose. Whence Seneca compares the mind of a wise and good man to the state of the upper region, which is always serene and calm. The high-priest Ananias being offended at the holy and ingenuous freedom

of our apostle, as if by asserting his own innocence he had reproached the justice of their tribunal, commanded those that stood next him, to strike him in the face; whereto the apostle tartly replied, that God would smite him, hypocrite as he was, who under a pretence of doing justice, had illegally commanded him to be punished, before the law condemned him for a malefactor.—Whereupon they that stood by asked him, how he durst thus affront so sacred and venerable a person as God's high-priest. He calmly returned that he did not know (or own) Ananias to be a high-priest (of God's appointment.) However, being a person in authority, it was not lawful to revile him, God himself having commanded, that "no man should speak evil of the ruler of the people."* The apostle, who, as he never laid aside the innocence of the dove, so knew how, when occasion was, to make use of the wisdom of the serpent; perceiving the council to consist partly of Sadducees and partly of Pharisees, openly told them that he was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee; and that the main thing he was questioned for, was his belief of a future resurrection. This quickly divided the council; the Pharisees being zealous patrons of that article, and the Sadducees as stiffly denying that there is either angel (that is, of a spiritual and immortal nature, really subsisting of itself; for otherwise they cannot be supposed to have utterly denied all sorts of angels, seeing they owned the Pentateuch, where-in there is frequent mention of them) or spirit, or that human souls do exist in a separate state, and consequently that there is no resurrection. Presently the doctors of the law, who were Pharisees, stood up to acquit him, affirming he had done nothing amiss; that it was possible he had received some intimation from heaven by an angel, or the revelation of the Holy Spirit; and if so, then in opposing his doctrine, they might fight against God himself.

9. Great were the dissensions in the council about this matter, insomuch that the governor fearing St. Paul would be torn in pieces, commanded the soldiers to take him from the bar, and return him back into the castle. That night, to comfort him after all his frights and fears, God was pleased to appear to him in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution, assuring him, that as he had borne witness to his cause at Jerusalem, so, in despite of all his enemies, he should live to bear his testimony even at Rome itself. The next morning the Jews, who could

* It is plain from the general tendency of Paul's doctrine and behavior, that if he refused to own Ananias as high-priest, he did so not from his own private opinions of his demerits, but from the certainty that the law was against his holding that office; and it is scarcely to be believed, that if he thus solemnly disputed his authority he would have so suddenly softened his rebuke. The more probable supposition is, that Paul's long absence from Jerusalem, the changes which had taken place in the high offices of the nation, together with the confusion that prevailed in the assembly described, did really prevent him from knowing the person of the high-priest, who it is to be remembered was not clad as if he had been ministering in the temple.—Ed.

* Acts xxii. 1.

† Tarsus, it is supposed, derived its privileges as a free Roman city from a grant made by Julius Cæsar; and there is every reason to believe that Paul owed his Roman citizenship to his birth in this place; but some learned men have conjectured that he derived it from his father, who is thought to have been made free of Rome for his services to the state.—Ed.

‡ Acts xxiii. 1.

as well cease to be as to be mischievous and malicious, finding that these dilatory proceedings were not like to do the work, resolved upon a quicker despatch. To which end above forty of them entered into a wicked confederacy, which they ratified by oath and execration, never to eat or drink till they had killed him; and having acquainted the Sanhedrim with their design, they entreated them to importune the governor, that he might again, the next day, be brought down before them, under pretence of a more strict trial of his case, and that they themselves would lie in ambush by the way, and not fail to despatch him. But that Divine Providence which peculiarly superintends the safety of good men, "disappoints the devices of the crafty." The design was discovered to St. Paul by a nephew of his, and by him imparted to the governor, who immediately commanded two parties of foot and horse to be ready by nine of the clock that night, and provision to be made for St. Paul's carriage to Felix, the Roman governor of that province: to whom also he wrote, signifying whom he had sent, how the Jews had used him; and that his enemies also should appear before him to manage the charge and accusation. Accordingly he was, by night, conducted to Antipatris, and afterwards to Cæsarea, where the letters being delivered to Felix, the apostle was presented to him; and finding that he belonged to the province of Cilicia, he told him, that as soon as his accusers were arrived he should have a hearing; commanding him in the mean time to be secured in the place called Herod's Hall.

SECTION VI.

Of St. Paul, from his first trial before Felix till his coming to Rome.

NOR many days after, down comes Ananias* the high-priest, with some others of the Sanhedrim, to Cæsarea, accompanied with Tertullus, their advocate, who, in a short, but neat speech, set off with all the flattering and insinuating arts of eloquence, began to implead our apostle, charging him with sedition, heresy, and the profanation of the temple, and adding, that they would have saved the governor the trouble of this hearing, by judging him according to their own law, had not Lysias the commander violently taken him from them, and sent both him and them down thither. To all which the Jews that were with him gave in their vote and testimony. St. Paul having leave from Felix to defend himself; and having told him how much he was satisfied in having to plead before one who, for so many years had been governor of that nation, distinctly answered to the several parts of the charge.

2. And first, for sedition: he point-blank denied it, affirming that they found him behaving himself quietly and peaceably in the temple, not so much as disputing there, nor stirring up the people either in the synagogues, or any other place of the city. And though this was plausibly pre-

tended by them, yet were they never able to make it good. As for the charge of heresy, that he was a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, he ingenuously acknowledged that after the way which they counted heresy, so he worshipped God; the same way in substance wherein all the patriarchs of the Jewish nation had worshipped God before him, taking nothing into his creed, but what the authentic writers of the Jews themselves did own and justify; that he firmly believed what the better of themselves were ready to grant, another life, and a future resurrection; in the hope and expectation whereof he was careful to live unblamable, and conscientiously to do his duty both to God and men. As for the third part of the charge, his profaning of the temple, he shows how little foundation there was for it; that the design of his coming to Jerusalem was to bring charitable contributions to his distressed brethren; that he was indeed in the temple, but not as some Asiatic Jews falsely suggested, either with tumult or with multitude; but only purifying himself according to the rites and customs of the Mosaic law; and that if any would affirm the contrary, they should now come into open court and make it good.—Nay, that he appealed to those of the Sanhedrim that were there present, whether he had not been acquitted by their own great council at Jerusalem, where nothing of moment had been laid to his charge, except by them of the Sadducean party, who quarrelled with him only for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection. Felix having thus heard both parties argue, refused to make any final determination in the case, till he had more fully advised about it, and spoken with Lysias, commander of the garrison, who was best able to give an account of the sedition and the tumult; commanding, in the mean time, that St. Paul should be under guard; but yet in so free a custody that none of his friends should be hindered from visiting him, or performing any office of kindness and friendship to him.

3. It was not long after this before his wife, Drusilla, (a Jewess, daughter of the elder Herod; and whom Tacitus, I fear by a mistake for his former wife, Drusilla, daughter to Juba, king of Mauritania, makes niece to Anthony and Cleopatra,) came to him to Cæsarea. Who being present, he sent for St. Paul to appear before them, and gave him leave to discourse concerning the doctrine of Christianity. In his discourse he took occasion particularly to insist upon the great obligation which the laws of Christ lay upon men to justice and righteousness toward one another, to sobriety and chastity both towards themselves and others; withal urging that severe and impartial account that must be given in the judgment of the other world, wherein men shall be arraigned for all the actions of their past life, and be eternally punished or rewarded according to their works. A discourse wisely adapted by the apostle to Felix's state and temper. But corrosives are very uneasy to a guilty mind: men naturally hate that which "brings their sins to their remembrance," and sharpens the sting of a violated conscience. The prince was so nettled with the apostle's reasonings, that he fell a trembling, and caused the apostle to break off abruptly, telling him, he would hear the rest at some other season. And good

* Acts xxiv.

reason there was that Felix's conscience should be sensibly alarmed with these reflections, being a man notoriously infamous for rapine and violence. Tacitus tells us of him, that he made his will the law of his government, practising all manner of cruelty and injustice. And then for incontinency, he was given over to luxury and debauchery; for the compassing whereof he scrupled not to violate all laws both of God and man.—Whereof this very wife Drusilla was a famous instance.* For, being married by her brother, to Aziz, king of the Emisenes, Felix, who had heard of her incomparable beauty, by the help of Simon the magician, a Jew of Cyprus, ravished her from her husband's bed; and in defiance of all law and right, kept her for his own wife.† To these qualities he had added bribery and covetousness; and therefore frequently sent for St. Paul to discourse with him, expecting that he should have given him a considerable sum for his release; and the rather probably, because he had heard that St. Paul had lately brought up great sums of money to Jerusalem. But finding no offers made, either by the apostle or his friends, he kept him prisoner for two years together, so long as himself continued procurator of that nation; when being displaced by Nero, he left St. Paul still in prison, on purpose to gratify the Jews, and engage them to speak better of him after his departure from them.

4. To him succeeded Pontius Festus,‡ in the procuratorship of the province; at whose first coming to Jerusalem, the high-priest and Sanhedrim presently began to prefer to him an indictment against St. Paul, desiring, that in order to his trial, he might be sent for up from Cæsarea; designing, this pretence, that assassins should lie in the way to murder him. Festus told them, that he himself was going shortly for Cæsarea, and that if they had any thing against St. Paul, they should come down thither and accuse him. Accordingly, being come to Cæsarea, and setting in open judicature, the Jews began to renew the charge which they had heretofore brought against St. Paul; of all which he cleared himself, they not being able to make any proof against him. However, Festus being willing to oblige the Jews in the entrance upon his government, asked him whether he would go up and be tried before him at Jerusalem. The apostle, well understanding the consequences of that proposal, told him that he was a Roman, and therefore ought to be judged by their laws; that he stood now at Cæsar's own judgment-seat, (as indeed what was done by the emperor's procurator in any province, the law reckoned as done by the emperor himself,) and though he should submit to

the Jewish tribunal, yet he himself saw that they had nothing which they could prove against him; that if he had done any thing which really deserved capital punishment, he was willing to undergo it; but if not, he ought not to be delivered over to his enemies, who were before-hand resolved to take away his life. However, as the safest course, he solemnly made his appeal to the Roman emperor, who should judge between them.* Whereupon Festus advising with the Jewish Sanhedrim, received his appeal, and told him he should go to Cæsar. This way of appealing was frequent among the Romans, introduced to defend and secure the lives and fortunes of the populary from the unjust encroachments, and over-rigorous severities of the magistrates; whereby it was lawful in cases of oppression to appeal to the people for redress and rescue, a thing more than once and again settled by the sanction of the Valerian laws. These appeals were wont to be made in writing, by appellatory libels given in, wherein was contained an account of the appellant; the person against whom, and from whose sentence he did appeal. But where the case was done in open court, it was enough for the criminal verbally to declare that he did appeal: in great and weighty cases appeals were made to the prince himself, and that not only at Rome; but in the provinces of the empire, all proconsuls and governors of provinces being strictly forbidden to execute, scourge, bind, or put any badge of servility upon a citizen, or any that had the privilege of a citizen of Rome, who had made his appeal; or any ways to hinder him from going thither, to obtain justice at the hands of the emperor, who had as much regard to the liberty of his subjects (says the law itself) as they could have of good-will and obedience to him. And this was exactly St. Paul's case, who knowing that he should have no fair and equitable dealing at the hands of the governor, when once he came to be swayed by the Jews, his sworn and inveterate enemies, appealed from him to the emperor; the reason why Festus durst not deny his demand, it being a privilege so often, so plainly settled and confirmed by the Roman laws.

5. Some time after king Agrippa, who succeeded Herod in the tetrarchate of Galilee, and his sister Bernice came to Cæsarea, to make a visit to the new come governor. To him Festus gave an account of St. Paul, and the great stir and trouble that had been made about him; and how for his safety and vindication he had immediately appealed to Cæsar. Agrippa was very desirous to see and hear him, and accordingly the next day the king and his sister, accompanied with Festus the governor, and other persons of quality, came into the court with a pompous and magni-

* Joseph. Antiquit. Jud. lib. xx. c. 5, p. 693.

† This Drusilla was the youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa, and had been originally betrothed to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus; but this contract was broken, Epiphanes refusing to submit, as he had promised, to the rite of circumcision. Josephus states as above related, that she was enticed from Azizus by the artful persuasions of Simon, the creature of Felix; but adds the important circumstance, that her chief motive for yielding was to avoid the envy and evil machinations of her sister, Bernice, who hated her because of the admiration she excited by her beauty.—Ed.

‡ Acts xxv. 1.

* It is not unworthy of observation, that the apostle of the Gentiles thus appealed for justice to a tribunal, and a system of laws, acknowledged by the world at large. The legal institutions of his own nation were mingled with precepts, on which corrupt interpreters had founded arguments destructive of the universality of its moral equity. But he was the first of his people, the first pre-eminent of Christ's disciples, who declared, by a species of providential influence, that the civil institutions of Israel had lost all power and authority.—Ed.

ficient retinue, where the prisoner was brought forth before him. Festus having acquainted the king and the assembly, how much he had been solicited by the Jews, both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, concerning the prisoner at the bar, that as a notorious malefactor he might be put to death; but that having found him guilty of no capital crime, and the prisoner himself having appealed to Cæsar, he was resolved to send him to Rome; but yet was willing to have his case again discussed before Agrippa, that so he might be furnished with some material instructions to send along with him, since it was very absurd to send a prisoner, without signifying what crimes were charged upon him.

6. Hereupon Agrippa told the apostle, he had liberty to make his own defence: * to whom, after silence made, he particularly addressed his speech. He tells him, in the first place, what a happiness he had, that he was to plead before one so exactly versed in all the rites and customs, the questions and the controversies of the Jewish law; that the Jews themselves knew what had been the course and manner of his life, how he had been educated under the institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the whole Jewish religion, and had been particularly disquieted and arraigned for what had been the constant belief of all their fathers, what was sufficiently credible in itself, and plainly enough revealed in the Scripture, the resurrection of the dead. He next gave him an account with what a bitter and implacable zeal he had formerly persecuted Christianity; told him the whole story and method of his conversion, and that, in compliance with a particular vision from heaven, he had preached repentance and reformation of life first to the Jews, and then after to the Gentiles; that it was for no other things than these that the Jews apprehended him in the temple, and designed to murder him; but being rescued and upheld by a divine power, he continued in this testimony to this day, asserting nothing but what was perfectly agreeable to Moses and the prophets, who had plainly foretold that the Messiah should be put to death and rise again, and by his doctrine enlighten both the Jewish and the Gentile world. While he was thus discoursing, Festus openly cried out, that he talked like a madman, † that his overmuch study had put him beside himself. The apostle calmly replied, that he was far from being transported with idle and distracted humors, that he spake nothing but what was most true and real in itself, and what very well became that grave, sober auditor. And then, again addressing himself to Agrippa, told him, that these things having been open and public, he could not but be acquainted with them; that he was confident that he believed the prophets, and must needs therefore know that those prophecies were fulfilled in Christ.

* Acts xxvi. 1.

† The exclamation of Festus afforded a singular testimony to the merits and ability of the apostle. It was evidently forced from him by impatience and astonishment; but it served to cut the knot which his doubts and the difficulty of the case had suddenly created. Paul's politic conduct in appealing to Cæsar, was a sufficient proof of his coolness and prudence, as well as sanity.—ED.

Hereat Agrippa replied, that he had almost persuaded him to embrace the Christian faith; to which the apostle returned, that he heartily prayed that not only he but the whole auditory were, not only in some measure, but altogether, though not prisoners, yet as much Christians as he himself was. This done, the king, and the governor, and the rest of the council withdrew awhile, to confer privately about this matter; and finding, by the accusations brought against him, that he was not guilty by the Roman laws of any capital offence, no, nor of any that deserved so much as imprisonment, Agrippa told Festus that he might have been released if he had not appealed unto Cæsar; for the appeal being once made, the judge had then no power either to absolve or condemn, the cause being entirely reserved to the cognizance of that superior to whom the criminal had appealed.

7. It was now finally resolved that St. Paul should be sent to Rome; * in order whereunto he was, with some other prisoners of note, committed to the charge of Julius, commander of a company belonging to the legion of Augustus. Accompanied by St. Luke, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and some others, in September, ann. Chr. 56, or as others, 57, he went on board a ship of Adramyttium, and sailed to Sidon, where the captain civilly gave the apostle leave to go ashore, to visit his friends and refresh himself: thence to Cyprus, till they came to the Fair-Havens, a place near Myra, a city of Lycia. Here, winter growing on and St. Paul foreseeing it would be a dangerous voyage, persuaded them to put in and winter. But the captain preferring the judgment of the master of the ship, and especially because of the incommodiousness of the harbor, resolved, if possible, to reach Phœnice, a part of Crete, and to winter there. But it was not long before they found themselves disappointed of their hopes; for the calm southerly gale that blew before, suddenly changed into a stormy and blustering north-east wind, which so bore down all before it, that they were forced to let the ship drive at the pleasure of the wind; but as much as might be, to prevent splitting or running aground, they threw out a great part of their lading and the tackle of the ship. Fourteen days they remained in this desperate and uncomfortable condition, neither sun nor stars appearing for a great part of the time: the apostle putting them in mind how ill advised they were in not taking his counsel; howbeit they should be of good cheer, for that that God whom he served and worshipped, had the last night purposely sent an angel from heaven, to let him know, that notwithstanding the present danger they were in, yet that he should be brought safe before Nero; that they should be shipwrecked indeed, and cast upon an island; but that for his sake God had spared all in the ship, not one whereof should perish; and that he did not doubt but that it would accordingly come to pass. On the fourteenth night, upon sounding, they found themselves nigh some coast; and therefore, to avoid rocks, thought good to come to an anchor, till the morning might give them better information. In the mean time the seamen (who best understood

* Acts xxvii. 1.

the danger) were preparing to get into the skiff to save themselves; which St. Paul espying, told the captain, that unless they all staid in the ship none could be safe; whereupon the soldiers cut the ropes, and let the skiff fall off into the sea. Between this and day-break, the apostle advised them to eat and refresh themselves, having all this time kept no ordinary and regular meals, assuring them they should all escape; himself first taking bread, and having blessed God for it before them all, the rest followed his example, and cheerfully fell to their meat; which done, they lightened the ship of what remained, and endeavored to put into a creek, which they discovered not far off; but falling into a place where two seas met, the forepart of the ship ran aground, while the hinderpart was beaten in pieces with the violence of the waves. Awakened with the danger they were in, the soldiers cried out to kill the prisoners to prevent their escape; which the captain, desirous to save St. Paul, and probably in confidence of what he had told them, refused to do; commanding, that every one should shift for himself: the issue was, that part by swimming, part on planks, part on pieces of the broken ship, they all, to the number of two hundred threescore and sixteen, (the whole number in the ship,) got safe to shore.

8. The island upon which they were cast was Melita,* (now Malta,) situate in the Libyan sea, between Syracuse and Africa. Here they found civility among barbarians, and the plain acknowledgments of a divine justice written among the naked and untutored notions of men's minds. The people treated them with great humanity, entertaining them with all necessary accommodations; but while St. Paul was throwing sticks upon the fire, a viper dislodged by the heat, came out of the wood, and fastened on his hand. This the people no sooner espied, but presently concluded, that surely he was some notorious murderer, whom though the divine vengeance had suffered to escape the hue-and-cry of the sea, yet had only reserved him for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake it off into the fire, and not presently swell, and drop down, they changed their opinions, and concluded him to be some god. So easily are light and credulous minds transported from one extreme to another. Not far off lived Publius, a man of great estate and authority, and (as we may probably guess from an inscription found there, and set down by Grotius, wherein the ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ is reckoned amongst the Roman officers) governor of the island: by him they were courteously entertained three days at his own charge; and his father lying at that time sick of a fever and a dysentery, St. Paul went in, and having prayed, and laid his hands upon him, healed him; as he did also many of the inhabitants, who by this miracle were encouraged to bring their diseased to him; whereby great honors were heaped upon him, and both he and his company furnished with provisions necessary for the rest of their voyage. Nay, Publius himself is said, by some, to have been hereby converted to the faith, and by St. Paul to have been constituted bishop of the island; and that this was he that

succeeded St. Denis, the Areopagite, in the see of Athens, and was afterwards crowned with martyrdom.

9. After three months stay in this island, they went on board the *Castor* and *Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy. At Syracuse they put in, and stayed three days; thence sailed to Rhegium, and so to *Putcoli*; where they landed and finding some Christians there, staid a week with them, and then set forward in their journey to Rome. The Christians at Rome having heard of their arrival, several of them came part of the way to meet them, some as far as the *Three Taverns*, a place thirty-three miles from Rome, others as far as *Appii Forum*, fifty-one miles distant thence. Great was their mutual salutation, and the encouragement which the apostle received by it; glad, no doubt, to see that Christians found so much liberty at Rome. By them he was conducted in a kind of triumph into the city; where, when they were arrived, the rest of the prisoners were delivered over to the captain of the guard, and by him disposed in the common jail, while St. Paul (probably at Julia's request and recommendation) was permitted to stay in a private house, only with a soldier to secure and guard him.

SECTION VII.

St. Paul's acts, from his coming to Rome till his martyrdom.

THE first thing St. Paul did after he came to Rome, was to summon the heads of the Jewish consistory there, whom he acquainted with the cause and manner of his coming; that though he had been guilty of no violation of the law of their religion, yet had he been delivered by the Jews into the hands of the Roman governors; who would have acquitted him once and again, as innocent of any capital offence, but by the perverseness of the Jews he was forced, not with an intention to charge his own nation, (already sufficiently odious to the Romans,) but only to vindicate and clear himself, to make his appeal to Cæsar; that being come, he had sent for them, to let them know that it was for his constant asserting the resurrection, the hope of all true Israelites, that he was bound with that chain which they saw upon him. The Jews replied, that they had received no advice concerning him, nor had any of the nation that came from Judæa, brought any charge against him: only for the religion which he had espoused, they desired to be a little better informed about it, it being every where decried, both by Jew and Gentile. Accordingly, upon a day appointed, he discoursed to them from morning to night, concerning the religion and doctrine of the holy Jesus, proving from the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, that he was the true Messiah. His discourse succeeded not with all alike, some being convinced, others persisted in their infidelity; and as they were departing in some discontent at each other, the apostle told them, it was now too plain, God had accomplished upon them the prophetic curse, of being left to their own wilful hardness

* Acts xxviii. 1.

and impenitency, to be blind at noon-day, and to run themselves against all means and methods into irrecoverable ruin; that since the case was thus with them, they must expect, that henceforth he should turn his preaching to the Gentiles, who would be most ready to entertain what they had so scornfully rejected, the glad tidings of the gospel.*

2. It was not, probably, long after this, that he was brought to his first hearing before the emperor, where those friends whom he most expected should stand by him, plainly deserted him: afraid it seems of appearing in so ticklish a cause before so unreasonable a judge, who governed himself by no other measures than the brutish and extravagant pleasure of his lust or humor. But God stood by him, and encouraged him; as indeed divine consolations are many times then nearest to us, when human assistances are furthest from us. This cowardice of theirs the apostle had a charity large enough to cover, heartily praying, that it might not be brought against them in the accounts of the great day.† Two years he dwelt at Rome in a house which he hired for his own use, wherein he constantly employed himself in preaching and writing for the good of the church. He preached daily, without interruption, to all that came to him, and with good success; yea, even upon some of the better rank and quality, and those belonging to the court itself. Among which, the Roman martyrology reckons Torpes, an officer of prime note in Nero's palace, and afterwards a martyr for the faith; and Chrysostom (if Baronius cites him right) tells us of Nero's cup-bearer, and one of his concubines, supposed by some to have been Poppæa Sabina, of whom Tacitus gives this character, that she wanted nothing to render her one of the most accomplished ladies in the world, but a chaste and a virtuous mind; and I know not how far it may seem to countenance her conversion, at least inclination to a better religion than that of paganism, that Josephus styles her a pious woman, and tells us that she effectually solicited the cause of the Jews with her husband, Nero; and what favors Josephus himself received from her at Rome, he relates in his own life.

3. Amongst other of our apostle's converts at Rome was Onesimus, who had formerly being servant to Philemon, a person of eminency in Colosse; but had run away from his master, and taken things of some value with him. Having rambled as far as Rome, he was now converted by St. Paul, and by him returned with commendatory letters to Philemon, his master, to beg his pardon, and that he might be received into favor, being now of a much better temper, more faithful and diligent, and useful to his master than he had been before; as indeed Christianity, where it is heartily entertained, makes men good in all relations; no laws being so wisely contrived for the peace and happiness of the world, as the laws of the gospel, as may appear by this particular

case of servants: what admirable rules, what severe laws does it lay upon them for the discharge of their duties! It commands them to honor their masters as their superiors, and to take heed of making their authority light and cheap, by familiar and contemptible thoughts and carriages, to obey them in all honest and lawful things, and that "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as unto God:" that they be faithful to the trust committed to them, and manage their master's interest with as much care and conscience as if it were their own; that they entertain their reproofs, counsels, corrections with all silence and sobriety, not returning any rude, surly answers; and this carriage to be observed, not only to masters of a mild and gentle, but of a cross and peevish disposition; that "whatever they do, they do it heartily, not as to men only, but to the Lord; knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for that they serve the Lord Christ." Imbued with these excellent principles, Onesimus is again returned unto his master; for Christian religion, though it improves men's tempers, does not cancel their relations; it teaches them to abide in their callings, and "not to despise their masters, because they are brethren, but rather do them service because they are faithful." And being thus improved, St. Paul the more confidently begged his pardon. And, indeed, had not Philemon been a Christian, and by the principles of his religion, both disposed and obliged to mildness and mercy, there had been great reason why St. Paul should be thus importunate with him for Onesimus's pardon; the case of servants in those days being very hard, for all masters were looked upon as having an unlimited power over their servants, and that not only by the Roman, but by the laws of all nations; whereby, without asking the magistrate's leave, or any public and formal trial, they might adjudge and condemn them to what work or punishment they pleased, even to the taking away of life itself. But the severity and exorbitancy of this power was afterwards somewhat curbed by the laws of succeeding emperors, especially after the empire submitted itself to Christianity, which makes better provision for persons in that capacity and relation; and in case of unjust and over-rigorous usage, enables them to appeal to a more righteous and impartial tribunal, where master and servant shall both stand upon even ground; "where he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons."

4. The Christians at Philippi having heard of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and not knowing what straits he might be reduced to, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus, their bishop, who was now come to Rome, where he shortly after fell dangerously sick: but being recovered, and upon the point to return, by him St. Paul sent his epistle to the Philippians, wherein he gives them some account of the state of affairs at Rome, gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him, and warns them of those dangerous opinions which the Judaizing teachers began to vent among them. The apostle had heretofore, for some years, lived at Ephesus, and perfectly understood the state and condition of that place;

* It is a remarkable fact, that the prejudices which prevailed among the Jews in their own country, should have thus infected them even in the midst of a highly free and cultivated people.—Ed.

† 1 Tim. iv. 16. ‡ Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 7, p. 697.

and therefore now, by Tychicus, writes his epistle to the Ephesians, endeavoring to countermin the principles and practices both of Jews and Gentiles, to confirm them in the belief and obedience of the Christian doctrine, to represent the infinite riches of the divine goodness in admitting the Gentile world to the unsearchable treasures of Christianity, especially pressing them to express the life and spirit of it in the general duties of religion, and in the duties of their particular relations. Much about the same time, or a little after, he wrote his epistle to the Colossians, among whom he had never been, and sent it by Epaphras who for some time had been his fellow-prisoner at Rome. The design of it is, for the greatest part, the same with that to the Ephesians, to settle and confirm them in the faith of the gospel, against the errors both of Judaism, and the superstitious observances of the heathen world, some whereof had taken root amongst them.

5. It is not improbable but that about this, or rather some considerable time before, St. Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy. I know Eusebius, and the ancients, and most moderns after them, will have it written a little before his martyrdom; induced thereunto by that passage in it, that he was then "ready to be offered, and that the time of his departure was at hand." But surely it is most reasonable to think, that it was written at his first being at Rome, and that at his first coming thither, presently after his trial before Nero. Accordingly, the passage before mentioned may import no more, than that he was in imminent danger of his life, and had received the sentence of death in himself, not hoping to escape out of the paws of Nero; but that "God had him delivered out of the mouth of the lion," i. e. the great danger he was in at his coming thither: which exactly agrees to his case at his first being at Rome, but cannot be reconciled with his last coming thither; together with many more circumstances in this epistle, which render it next door to certain. In it he appoints Timothy shortly to come to him, who accordingly came, and whose name is joined together with his in the front of several epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon. The only thing that can be leveled against this is, that in his epistle to Timothy, he tells him, that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus, by whom it is plain that the epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians were despatched; and that therefore this to Timothy must be written after them. But I see no inconvenience to affirm, that Tychicus might come to Rome presently after St. Paul's arrival there; might be by him immediately sent back to Ephesus upon some emergent affair of that church; and after his return to Rome be sent with those two epistles. The design of the epistle was to excite the holy man to a mighty zeal and diligence, care and fidelity in his office, and to antidote the people against those poisonous principles that in those parts especially began to debase the minds of men.

6. As for the epistle to the Hebrews, it is very uncertain when, or whence, and (for some ages doubted) by whom it was written. Eusebius tells us it was not received by many, because rejected by the church of Rome, as none of St. Paul's genuine epistles. Origen affirms the style

and phrase of it to be more fine and elegant, and to contain in it a rich vein of purer Greek than is usually found in St. Paul's epistles; as every one that is able to judge of a style, must needs confess; that the sentences indeed are grave and weighty, and such as breathe the spirit and majesty of an apostle; that therefore it was his judgment that the matter contained in it had been dictated by some apostle; but that it had been put into phrase, form, and order by some other person that did attend upon him; that if any church owned it for St. Paul's, they were not to be condemned, it not being without reason by the ancients ascribed to him; though God only knew who was the true author of it. He further tells us, that report had handed it down to his time, that it had been composed partly by Clemens of Rome, partly by Luke the evangelist. Tertullian adds, that it was writ by Barnabas. What seems most likely in such variety of opinions is, that St. Paul originally wrote it in Hebrew; it being to be sent to the Jews, his countrymen, and by some other person, probably St. Luke, or Clemens Romanus, translated into Greek; especially since both Eusebius and St. Jerome observed of old such a great affinity both in style and sense between this and Clemens's epistle to the Corinthians, as thence positively to conclude him to be the translator of it. It was written, as we may conjecture, a little after he was restored to his liberty, and probably while he was yet in some parts of Italy, whence he dates his salutations.* The main design of it is to magnify Christ and the religion of the gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy and ministration; that by this means he might the better establish and confirm the convert Jews in the firm belief and profession of Christianity, notwithstanding those sufferings and persecutions that came upon them; endeavoring throughout to arm and fortify them against apostacy from that noble and excellent religion wherein they had so happily engaged themselves. And great need there was for the apostle severely to urge them to it; heavy persecutions, both from Jews and Gentiles, pressing in upon them on every side, besides those trains of specious and plausible insinuations that were laid to reduce them to their ancient institutions. Hence, the apostle calls apostacy "the sin which did so easily beset them,"† to which there were such frequent temptations, and into which they were so prone to be betrayed in those suffering times. And the more to deter them from it, he once and again sets before them the dreadful state and condition of apostates; those who have been "once enlightened,"‡ and baptized into the Christian faith, "tasted" the promises of the gospel, and been "made partakers" of the miraculous gifts of the "Holy Ghost," those "powers" which in the "world to come," or this new state of things, were to be conferred upon the church; if after all this, "these men fall away," and renounce Christianity, it is very hard, and even "impossible to renew them again unto repentance." For by this means "they trod under foot," and "crucified the Son of God afresh," and "put him to an open shame," profaned "the blood of the covenant,"

* Heb. xiii. 24. † Chap. xii. 1. ‡ Chap. vi. 1, 4, 6.

and "did despite to the spirit of grace." So, that "to sin" thus "wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the truth, there" could "remain" for them "no more sacrifice for sins;" nothing "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which should devour" these "adversaries." And "a fearful thing it was," in such circumstances, "to fall into the hands of the living God;"* who had particularly said of this sort of sinners, that "if any man drew back, his soul should have no pleasure in him." Hence it is, that every where in this epistle he mixes exhortations to this purpose, that "they would give earnest heed to the things which they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip;" that "they would hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end," and "beware, lest by an evil heart of unbelief they departed from the living God;" that they would "labor to enter into his rest, lest any man fall after the example of unbelief; that leaving the" first "principles of the doctrine of Christ, they would go on to perfection, showing diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; not being slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises;" that they would "hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, (as the manner of some was,)" nor "cast away their confidence, which had great recompence of reward;" that "they had need of patience, that after they had done the will of God, they might receive the promise;" that they "would not be of them who drew back unto perdition, but of them that believed to the saving of the soul;" that "being encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," who with the most unconquerable constancy and resolution had all holden on in the way to heaven, "they would lay aside every weight, and the sin which did so easily beset them, and run with patience the race that was set before them;" especially "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, who endured the cross, and despised the shame;" that therefore "they should consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they should be wearied and faint in their minds;" for that "they had not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin; looking diligently, lest any man should fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up should trouble them, and thereby many be defiled." By all which, and much more that might be observed to this purpose, it is evident what our apostle's great design was in this excellent epistle.

7. Our apostle being now, after two years' custody, perfectly restored to liberty, remembered that he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and had therefore a larger diocese than Rome, and accordingly prepared himself for a greater circuit, though which way he directed his course is not absolutely certain. By some he is said to have returned back into Greece, and the parts of Asia, upon no other ground that I know of, than a few intimations in some of his epistles that he intended to do so. By others he is thought to have preached

both in the eastern and western parts, which is not inconsistent with the time he had after his departure from Rome. But of the latter we have better evidence. Sure I am, an author beyond all exception, St. Paul's contemporary and fellow-laborer, I mean Clemens, in his famous epistle to the Corinthians, expressly tells us, that being a preacher both in the east and west, he taught righteousness to the whole world, and went to the utmost bounds of the west: which makes me the more wonder at the confidence of one (otherwise a man of great parts and learning) who so peremptorily denies that ever our apostle preached in the west, merely because there are no monuments left in primitive antiquity of any particular churches there founded by him; as if all the particular passages of his life, done at so vast a distance, must needs have been recorded, or those records have come down to us, when it is so notoriously known, that almost all the writings and monuments of those first ages of Christianity are long since perished; or as if we were not sufficiently assured of the thing in general, though not of what particulars he did there. Probable it is, that he went into Spain, a thing which himself tells us he had formerly once and again resolved on. Certain it is, that the ancients do generally assert it, without seeming in the least to doubt of it. Theodoret and others tell us, that he preached not only in Spain, but that he went to other nations, and brought the gospel into the isles of the sea, by which he undoubtedly means Britain; and therefore elsewhere reckons the Gauls and Britons among the nations which the apostles, and particularly the tent-maker, persuaded to embrace the law of Christ. Nor is he the only man that has said it, others having given in their testimony and suffrage in this case.*

8. To what other parts of the world St. Paul preached the gospel, we find no certain footsteps in antiquity, nor any further mention of him till his return to Rome, which probably was about the eighth or ninth year of Nero's reign. Here he met with Peter, and was, together with him, thrown into prison; no doubt in the general persecution raised against the Christians, under the pretence that they had fired the city. Besides the general, we may reasonably suppose there were particular causes of his imprisonment. Some of the ancients make him engaged with Peter in procuring the fall of Simon Magus, and that that derived the emperor's fury and rage upon him. St. Chrysostom give us this account; that having converted one of Nero's concubines, a woman of whom he was infinitely fond, and reduced her to a life of great strictness and chastity, so that now she wholly refused to comply with his wanton and impure embraces; the emperor stormed thereat, calling the apostle a villain and imposter, a wretched perverter and debaucher of others, giving order that he should be cast into prison; and when he still persisted in persuading the lady

* It is on an expression in the epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, that the opinion respecting Paul's journey into Spain chiefly rests: Clemens says, that "he came to the borders of the west;" but it is argued on the other side, that Rome or Italy only was intended by this expression.—Ed.

to continue her chaste and pious resolutions, commanding him to be put to death.

9. How long he remained in prison is not certainly known: at last his execution was resolved on;* what his preparatory treatment was, whether scourged as malefactors were wont to be in order to their death, we find not. As a Roman citizen by the Valerian and the Porcian law, he was exempted from it; though by the law of the twelve tables notorious malefactors, condemned by the centuriate assemblies, were first to be scourged, and then put to death; and Baronius tells us, that in the church of St. Mary, beyond the bridge of Rome, the pillars are yet extant, to which both Peter and Paul are said to have been bound and scourged. As he was led to execution, he is said to have converted three of the soldiers that were sent to conduct and guard him, who within a few days after, by the emperor's command, became martyrs for the faith. Being come to the place, which was the Aquæ Salvæ, three miles from Rome, after some solemn preparation, he cheerfully gave his neck to the fatal stroke. As a Roman he might not be put upon the cross, too infamous a death for any but the worst of slaves and malefactors; and therefore was beheaded; accounted a more noble kind of death, not among the Romans only, but among other nations, as being fitter for persons of better quality, and more ingenious education: and from this instrument of his execution the custom, no doubt, first arose, that in all pictures and images of this apostle, he is constantly represented with a sword in his right hand. Tradition reports (justified herein by the suffrage of many of the fathers) that when he was beheaded, a liquor more like milk than blood flowed from his veins, and spirted upon the clothes of his executioner; and had I list or leisure for such things, I might entertain the reader with little glosses that are made upon it. St. Chrysostom adds, that it became a means of converting his executioner, and many more to the faith; and that the apostle suffered in the sixty-eighth year of his age. Some question there is, whether he suffered at the same time with Peter; many of the ancients positively affirm, that both suffered on the same day and year; others, though allowing the same day, tells us that St. Paul suffered not until the year after; nay, some interpose the distance of several years. A manuscript writer of the lives and travels of Peter and Paul, brought amongst other venerable monuments of antiquity out of Greece, will have Paul to have suffered no less than five years after Peter, which he justifies by the authority of no less than Justin Martyr and Irenæus. But what credit is to be given to this nameless author, I see not; and therefore lay no weight upon it, nor think it fit to be put into the balance with the testimonies of the ancients. Certainly if he suffered not at the very same time with Peter, it could not be long after, not above a year at most. The best is, which of them soever started first, they both came at last to the same end of the race; to those palms and crowns which are reserved for all good men in heaven, but most eminently for the martyrs of the Christian faith.

10. He was buried in the Via Ostiensis about two miles from Rome, over whose grave, about the year 318, Constantine the Great, at the instance of pope Sylvester, built a stately church, within a farm which Lucina, a noble Christian matron of Rome, had long before settled upon that church. He adorned it with a hundred of the best marble columns, and beautified it with the most exquisite workmanship; the many rich gifts and endowments which he bestowed upon it, being particularly set down in the life of Sylvester. This church, as too narrow and little for the honor of so great an apostle, Valentinian, or rather Theodosius the emperor, (the one but finishing what the other began,) by a rescript directed to Sallustius, prefect of the city, caused to be taken down, and a larger and more noble church to be built in the room of it: further beautified (as appears from an ancient inscription) by Placidia the empress, at the persuasion of Leo, bishop of Rome. What other additions of wealth, honor, or stateliness, it has received since, concerns not me to inquire.

SECTION VIII.

The description of his Person and Temper, together with an account of his Writings.

THOUGH we have drawn St. Paul at large, in the account we have given of his life, yet may it be of use to represent him in little, in a brief account of his person, parts, and those graces and virtues, for which he was more peculiarly eminent and remarkable. For his person, we find it thus described. He was low, and of little stature, and somewhat stooping, his complexion fair, his countenance grave, his head small, his eyes carrying a kind of beauty and sweetness in them, his eyebrows a little hanging over, his nose long, but gracefully bending, his beard thick, and like the hair of his head, mixed with gray hairs. Somewhat of this description may be learnt from Lucian, when in the person of Trypho, one of St. Paul's disciples, he calls him by way of derision, high-nosed, bald-pated Galilean, that was caught up through the air unto the "third heaven," where he learnt great and excellent things. That he was very low, himself plainly intimates, when he tells us, they were wont to say of him, that "his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible;*" in which respect he is styled by Chrysostom, *ο τριπηνχος ανθρωπος*, a man three cubits [or a little more than four foot] high, and yet tall enough to reach heaven. He seems to have enjoyed no very firm and athletic constitution, being often subject to distempers. St. Jerome particularly reports, that he was frequently afflicted with the head-ache, and that this was thought by many to have been "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him," and that probably he intended some such thing by "the temptation in his flesh,"† which he elsewhere speaks of: which, however it may in general signify those afflictions that came upon him, yet does it primarily denote those diseases and infirmities that he was obnoxious to.

* That is, about the year 64 or 65.—Ed.

* 2 Cor. x. 10.

† Gal. iv. 14.

2. But how mean soever the cabinet was, there was a treasure within more precious and valuable, as will appear, if we survey the accomplishments of his mind. For as to his natural abilities and endowments, he seems to have had a clear and solid judgment, quick invention, a prompt and ready memory; all which were abundantly improved by art, and the advantages of a more liberal education. The schools of Tarsus had sharpened his discursive faculty by logic and the arts of reasoning, instructed him in the institutions of philosophy, and enriched him with the furniture of all kinds of human learning. This gave him great advantage above others, and ever raised him to a mighty reputation for parts and learning; insomuch that St. Chrysostom tells us of a dispute between a Christian and a heathen, wherein the Christian endeavored to prove against the Gentile, that St. Paul was more learned and eloquent than Plato himself. How well he was versed, not only in the law of Moses and the writings of the prophets, but even in classic and foreign writers, he has left us sure ground to conclude, from those excellent sayings which here and there he quotes out of heathen authors. Which, as at once it shows that it is not unlawful to bring the spoils of Egypt in the service of the sanctuary, and to make use of the advantages of foreign studies and human literature to divine and excellent purposes, so does it argue his being greatly conversant in the paths of human learning, which upon every occasion he could so readily command. Indeed he seemed to have been furnished out on purpose to be the doctor of the Gentiles; to contend with, and confute the grave and the wise, the acute and the subtle, the sage and the learned of the heathen world, and to wound them (as Julian's word was) with arrows drawn out of their own quiver. Though we do not find, that in his disputes with the Gentiles he made much use of learning and philosophy; it being more agreeable to the designs of the gospel, to confound the wisdom and learning of the world by the plain doctrine of the cross.

3. These were great accomplishments, and yet but a shadow to that divine temper of mind that was in him, which discovered itself through the whole course and method of his life. He was humble to the lowest step of abasement and condescension, none ever thinking better of others, or more meanly of himself. And though, when he had to deal with envious and malicious adversaries, who, by vilifying his person, sought to obstruct his ministry, he knew how to magnify his office, and to let them know, that he was "no whit inferior to the very chiefest apostles;" yet out of this case he constantly declared to all the world, that he looked upon himself as an abortive, and an untimely birth, as "the least of the apostles, not meet to be called an apostle; and as if this were not enough, he makes a word on purpose to express his humility, styling himself *ελαχιστον*, "less than the least of all saints," yea, "the very chief of sinners." How freely, and that at every turn, does he confess what he was before his conversion—a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious both to God and men? Though honored with peculiar acts of the highest grace and favor, taken up to an immediate converse with God in heaven; yet did not this inspire him with a supercilious loftiness

over the rest of his brethren: entrusted he was with great power and authority in the church, but never affected dominion over men's faith, nor any other place, than to be a helper of their joy; nor ever made use of his power, but to the edification, not destruction of any. How studiously did he decline all honors and commendations that were heaped upon him? When some in the church of Corinth cried him up beyond all measures, and under the patronage of his name began to set up for a party; he severely rebuked them, told them, that it was Christ, not he that was crucified for them; that they had "not been baptized into his name," which he was so far from, that he did not remember that he had baptized above three or four of them; and was heartily glad he had baptized no more, lest a foundation might have been laid for that suspicion; and that this Paul, indeed, whom they so much extolled, was no more than a minister of Christ, whom our Lord had appointed to plant and build up his church.

4. Great was his temperance and sobriety, so far from going beyond the bounds of regularity, that he abridged himself of the conveniences of lawful and necessary accommodations; frequent were his hungerings and thirstings, not constrained only, but voluntary: it is probably thought that he very rarely drank any wine; and certain is it, that by abstinence and mortification he "kept under and subdued his body," reducing the extravagancy of the sensual appetites to a perfect subjection to the laws of reason. By this means he easily got above the world, and its charms and frowns, and made his mind continually conversant in heaven; his thoughts were fixed there; his desires always ascending thither: what he taught others he practised himself; his "conversation was in heaven," and "his desires were to depart, and to be with Christ;" this world did neither arrest his affections, nor disturb his fears; he was not taken with its applause, nor frightened with its threatenings; he "studied not to please men," nor valued the censures and judgments, which they passed upon him; he was not greedy of a great estate, or titles of honor, or rich presents from men, not "seeking theirs, but them;" food and raiment was his bill of fare, and more than this he never cared for; accounting, that the less he was clogged with these things, the lighter he should march to heaven; especially travelling through a world overrun with troubles and persecutions. Upon this account it is probable he kept himself always within a single life, though there want not some of the ancients who expressly reckon him in the number of the married apostles, as Clemens Alexandrinus, Ignatius, and some others. It is true that passages is not to be found in the genuine epistle of Ignatius; but yet it is extant in all those that are owned and published by the church of Rome, though they have not been wanting to banish it out of the world, having expunged St. Paul's name out of some ancient manuscripts, as the learned bishop Usher has to their shame sufficiently discovered to the world. But for the main of the question we can readily grant it; the Scripture seeming most to favor it, that though he asserted his power and liberty to marry as well as the rest, yet that he lived always a single life.

5. His kindness and charity was truly admira-

ble; he had a compassionate tenderness for the poor, and a quick sense of the wants of others: to what church soever he came, it was one of his first cares to make provision for the poor, and to stir up the bounty of the rich and wealthy; nay, himself worked often with his own hands, not only to maintain himself, but to help and relieve them. But infinitely greater was his charity to the souls of men, fearing no dangers, refusing no labors, going through good and evil report, that he might gain men over to the knowledge of the truth, reduce them out of the crooked paths of vice and idolatry, and set them in the right way to eternal life. Nay, so insatiable his thirst after the good of souls, that he affirms, that rather than his countrymen the Jews should miscarry, by not believing and entertaining the gospel, he could be content, nay wished, that "himself might be accursed from Christ for their sake;" i. e. that he might be anathematized and cut off from the church of Christ, and not only lose the honor of the apostolate, but be reckoned in the number of the abject and execrable persons, such as those are who are separated from the communion of the church. An instance of so large and passionate a charity, that lest it might not find room in men's belief, he ushered it in with this solemn appeal and attestation, that "he said the truth in Christ, and lied not, his conscience bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost." And as he was infinitely solicitous to gain men over to the best religion in the world; so was he not less careful to keep them from being seduced from it, ready to suspect every thing that might "corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ." "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy,"* as he told the church of Corinth; an affection of all others the most active and vigilant, and which is wont to inspire men with the most passionate care and concernment for the good of those for whom we have the highest measures of love and kindness. Nor was his charity to men greater than his zeal for God, endeavoring with all his might to promote the honor of his master. Indeed, zeal seems to have had a deep foundation in the natural forwardness of his temper. How exceedingly zealous was he, while in the Jews' religion, of the traditions of his fathers; how earnest to vindicate and assert the divinity of the Mosaic dispensation, and to persecute all of a contrary way, even to rage and madness; and when afterwards turned into a right channel, it ran with as swift a current; carrying him out, against all opposition, to ruin the kingdom and the powers of darkness, to beat down idolatry, and to plant the world with right apprehensions of God, and the true notions of religion. When, at Athens, he saw them so much overgrown with the grossest superstition and idolatry, giving the honor that was alone due to God to statues and images, his zeal began to ferment and to boil up into paroxysms of indignation; and he could not but let them know the resentments of his mind, and how much herein they dishonored God, the great parent and maker of the world.

6. This zeal must needs put him upon a mighty diligence and industry in the execution of his

office, warning, reproving, entreating, persuading, "preaching in season and out of season," by night and by day, by sea and land; no pains too much to be taken, no dangers too great to be overcome. For five-and-thirty years after his conversion, he seldom stayed long in one place; from Jerusalem, through Arabia, Asia, Greece, round about to Ellyricum, to Rome, and even to the utmost bounds of the western world, "fully preaching the gospel of Christ:" running (says St. Jerome) from ocean to ocean, like the sun in the heavens, of which it is said, "his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it;" sooner wanting ground to tread on, than a desire to propagate the faith of Christ. Nicephorus compares him to a bird in the air, that in a few years flew round the world: Isidore the Pelusiot, to a winged husbandman, that flew from place to place to cultivate the world with the most excellent rules and institutions of life. And while the other apostles did as it were choose this or that particular province, as the main sphere of their ministry, St. Paul overran the whole world to its utmost bounds and corners, planting all places where he came with the divine doctrines of the gospel. Nor in this course was he tired out with the dangers and difficulties that he met with, the troubles and oppositions that were raised against him. All which did but reflect the greater lustre upon his patience; whereof, indeed (as Clement observes) he became a most eminent pattern and exemplar, during the biggest troubles and persecutions, with a patience triumphant and unconquerable. As will easily appear, if we take but a survey of what trials and sufferings he underwent, some part whereof are briefly summed up by himself. In labors abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths often; thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; and besides these things that were without, that which daily came upon him, the care of all the churches.* An account though very great, yet far short of what he endured; and wherein, as Chrysostom observes, he does *σφοδρὰ μετρίαιεν*, modestly keep himself within his measures; for had he taken the liberty fully to have enlarged himself, he might have filled hundreds of martyrologies with his sufferings. A thousand times was his life at stake; in every suffering he was a martyr, and what fell but in parcels upon others, came all upon him; while they skirmished only with single parties, he had the whole army of sufferings to contend with. All which he generously underwent with a soul as calm and serene as the morning-sun; no spite or rage, no fury or storms could ruffle and discompose his spirit: nay, those sufferings, which would have broken the back of an ordinary patience, did but

* 2 Cor. xi. 2.

* 2 Cor. xi. 23, et seq.

make him rise up with the greater eagerness and resolution for the doing of his duty.

7. His patience will yet further appear from the consideration of another, the last of those virtues we shall take notice of in him, his constancy and fidelity in the discharge of his place, and in the profession of religion. Could the powers and policies of men and devils, spite and oppositions, torments and threatenings have been able to baffle him out of that religion wherein he had engaged himself, he must have sunk under them, and left his station. But his soul was steeled with a courage and resolution that was impenetrable, and which no temptation either from hopes or fears could make any more impression upon, than an arrow can that is shot against a wall of marble. He wanted not solicitation on either hand, both from Jews and Gentiles; and questionless might, in some degree, have made his own terms, would he have been false to his trust, and have quitted that way that was then every where spoken against. But, alas! these things weighed little with our apostle, who "counted not his life to be dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus." And therefore, when under the sentence of death in his own apprehensions, could triumphantly say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" and so indeed he did, kept it inviolably, undauntedly to the last minute of his life. The sum is, he was a man, in whom the divine life did eminently manifest and display itself; he lived piously and devoutly, soberly and temperately, justly and righteously, careful "always to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and man." This he tells us was his support under suffering, this the foundation of his confidence towards God, and his firm hopes of happiness in another world: "this is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the world."*

8. It is not the least instance of his care and fidelity in his office, that he did not only preach and plant Christianity in all places whither he came, but what he could not personally do, he supplied by writing. Fourteen epistles he left upon record, by which he was not only instrumental in propagating Christian religion at first, but has been useful to the world ever since, in all ages of the church. We have all along, in the history of his life, taken particular notice of them in their due place and order: we shall here only make some general observations and remarks upon them, and that as to the style and way wherein they are written, their order, and the subscriptions that are added to them. For the apostle's style and manner of writing, it is plain and simple; and though not set off with the elaborate artifices and affected additions of human eloquence, yet grave and majestical, and that by the confession of his very enemies; "his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful."† Nor are there wanting in them some strains of rhetoric, which sufficiently testify his ability that way, had he

made it any part of his study and design. Indeed, St. Jerome is sometimes too rude and bold in his censures of St. Paul's style and character. He tells us, that being a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and admirably skilled in the language of his nation, he was greatly defective in the Greek tongue, (though a late great critic is of another mind, affirming him to have been as well, or better skilled in Greek than in Hebrew, or in Syriac,) wherein he could not sufficiently express his conceptions in a way becoming the majesty of his sense and the matter he delivered, nor transmit the elegance of his native tongue into another language; that hence he became obscure and intricate in his expressions, guilty many times of solecisms, and scarce tolerable syntax, and that therefore it was not his humility, but the truth of the thing that made him say, that "he came not with the excellency of speech, but in the power of God." A censure from any other than St. Jerome that would have been justly wondered at; but we know the liberty that he takes to censure any, though the reverence due to so great an apostle might, one would think, have challenged a more modest censure at his hands. However, elsewhere he cries him up as a great master of composition, that as oft as he heard him, he seemed to hear not words, but thunder; that in all his citations he made use of the most prudent artifices, using simple words, and which seemed to carry nothing but plainness along with them; but which way soever a man turned, breathed force and thunder; he seems entangled in his cause, but catches all that comes near him; turns his back, as if he intended to fly, when it is only that he may overcome.

9. St. Peter long since observed, that in Paul's epistles there were "some things hard to be understood;"* which surely is not altogether owing to the profoundness of his sense, and the mysteriousness of the subject that he treats of, but in some degree to his manner of expression; ‡ his frequent Hebraisms, (common to him with all the holy writers of the New Testament,) his peculiar forms and ways of speech, his often inserting Jewish opinions, and yet but tacitly touching them, his using some words in a new and uncommon sense, but above all, his frequent and abrupt transitions, suddenly starting aside from one thing to another, whereby his reader is left at a loss, not knowing which way to follow him, not a little contributing to the perplexed obscurity of his discourses. Irenæus took notice of old, that St. Paul makes frequent use of these hyperbata, by reason of the swiftness of his arguings, and the great fervor and impetus that was in him, leaving many times the designed frame and texture of his discourse, not bringing in what should have immediately connected the sense and order, till some distance after; which, indeed, to men of a more nice and delicate temper, and who will not give themselves leave patiently to trace out his rea-

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

† This is not likely to have been the case: Peter, as a Hebrew, must have been too thoroughly imbued with the customs and phraseology of his nation to speak in this manner of mere idiomatic difficulties.—Ed.

sonings, must needs create some obscurity. Origen and St. Jerome sometimes observe, that besides this he uses many of his native phrases of the Cilician dialect, which being in a great measure foreign and exotic to the ordinary Greek, introduces a kind of strangeness into his discourse, and renders it less intelligible. Epiphanius tells us, that by these methods he acted like a skilful archer, hitting the mark before his adversaries were aware of it; by words misplaced making the frame of his discourse seem obscure and entangled, while in itself it was not only most true, but elaborate, and not difficult to be understood; that to careless and trifling readers it might sometimes seem dissonant and incoherent, but to them that are diligent, and will take their reason along with them, it would appear full of truth, and to be disposed with great care and order.

10. As for the order of these epistles, we have already given a particular account of the times when, and the places whence they were written. That which is here considerable, is the order according to which they are disposed in the sacred canon. Certain it is, that they are not placed according to the just order of time wherein they were written; the two epistles to the Thessalonians being on all hands agreed to have been first written, though set almost last in order. Most probable therefore it is, that they were placed according to the dignity of those to whom they were sent; the reason, why those to whole churches have the precedency of those to particular persons; and among those to churches, that to the Romans had the first place and rank assigned to it, because of the majesty of the imperial city, and the eminency and honorable respect which that church derived thence; and whether the same reason do not hold in others, though I will not positively assert, yet I think none will over-confidently deny. The last inquiry concerns the subscriptions added to the end of these epistles; which, were they authentic, would determine some doubts concerning the time and place of their writing. But, alas, they are of no just value and authority, not the same in all copies, different in the Syriac and Arabic versions, nay, wholly wanting in some ancient Greek copies of the New Testament; and were doubtless at first added at best upon probable conjectures. When at any time they truly represent the place whence, or the person by whom the epistle was sent, it is not that they are to be relied upon in it, but because the thing is either intimated or expressed in the body of the epistle. I shall add no more but this observation, that St. Paul was wont to subscribe every epistle with his own hand, "which is my token in every epistle; so I write."* Which was done (says one of the ancients) to prevent impostures, that his epistles might not be interpolated and corrupted, and that if any vented epistles under his name, the cheat might be discovered by the apostle's own hand not being to them; and this brings me to the last consideration, that shall conclude this chapter.

11. That there were some, even in the most early ages of Christianity, who took upon them

(for what ends I stand not now to inquire) to write books, and publish them under the name of some apostle, is notoriously known to all who are the least conversant in church antiquities. Herein St. Paul had his part and share, several supposititious writings being fathered and thrust upon him. We find a gospel ascribed by some of the ancients to him, which surely arose from no other cause, than that in some of his epistles he makes mention of "my gospel." Which, as St. Jerome observes, can be meant of no other than the gospel of St. Luke, his constant attendant, and from whom he chiefly derived his intelligence. If he wrote another epistle to the Corinthians, precedent to those two extant at this day, as he seems to imply in a passage in his first epistle. "I have wrote unto you in an epistle, not to keep company,"* &c., a passage not conveniently applicable to any part either in that or the other epistle; nay, a verse or two after, the first epistle is directly opposed to it; all that can be said in the case is,† that it long since perished, the Divine Providence not seeing it necessary to be preserved for the service of the church. Frequent mention there is also of an epistle of his to the Laodiceans, grounded upon a mistaken passage in the epistle to the Colossians;‡ but besides that the apostle does not there speak of an epistle written to the Laodiceans, but of one from them, Tertullian tells us, that by the epistle to the Laodiceans is meant that to the Ephesians, and that Marcion, the heretic, was the first that changed the title; and therefore, in his enumeration of St. Paul's epistles he omits that to the Ephesians, for no other reason, doubtless, but that according to Marcion's opinion, he had reckoned it up under the title of that to the Laodiceans. Which yet is more clear, if we consider that Epiphanius, citing a place quoted by Marcion out of the epistle to the Laodiceans, it is in the very same words found in that to the Ephesians at this day. However, such an epistle is still extant, forged, no doubt, before St. Jerome's time, who tells us, that it was read by some, but yet exploded and rejected by all. Besides these there was his Revelation, called also 'Αναβατικόν, or his Ascension, grounded on his ecstasy or rapture into heaven, first forged by the Cainian heretics, and in great use and estimation among the Gnostics. Sozomen tells us, that this apocalypse was owned by none of the ancients, though much commended by some monks in his time; and he further adds, that in the time of the emperor Theodosius, it was said to have been found in an underground chest of marble in St. Paul's house at Tarsus, and that by a particular revelation. A story which, upon inquiry, he found to be as false as the book itself was evidently forged and spurious. The Acts of St. Paul are mentioned both by Origen and Eusebius, but not as writings of approved and unquestionable credit and authority. The epistles that are said to have passed between St. Paul and Seneca, how early soever they started in the church, yet the falsehood and fabulousness of them is now too notoriously known to need any further account or description of them.

* 2 Thess. iii. 17.

* 1 Cor. v. 9.

† Ver. 11.

‡ Col. iv. 16.

SECTION IX.

The principal controversies that exercised the church in his time.

THOUGH our Lord and his apostles delivered the Christian religion, especially as to the main and essential parts of it, in as plain a manner as words could express it, yet were there men of perverse and "corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith," who from different causes, some ignorantly or wilfully mistaking the doctrines of Christianity, others to serve ill purposes and designs, began to introduce errors and unsound opinions into the church, and to debauch the minds of men from the simplicity of the gospel; hereby disquieting the thoughts, and alienating the affections of men and disturbing the peace and order of the church. The first ringleader of this heretical crew was Simon Magus, who not being able to attain his ends of the apostles, by getting a power to confer miraculous gifts, whereby he designed to greatness and enrich himself, resolved to be revenged of them, scattering the most poisonous tares among the good wheat that they had sown, bringing in the most pernicious principles; and as the natural consequent of that, patronizing the most debauched villainous practices; and this under a pretence of still being Christians. To enumerate the several dogmata and damnable heresies, first broached by Simon, and then vented and propagated by his disciples and followers, who though passing under different titles, yet all centered at last in the name of Gnostics, a term which we shall sometimes use for convenience, (though it took not place till after St. Paul's time) were as needless as it is alien to my purpose. I shall only take notice of a few of more signal remark, and such as St. Paul in his epistles does eminently reflect upon.

2. Amongst the opinions and principles of Simon and his followers, this was one, that God did not create the world, but that it was made by angels. That divine honors were due to them, and that they were to be adored as subordinate mediators between God and us. This our apostle saw growing up apace, and struck betimes at the root in that early caution he gave to the Colossians, to "let no man beguile them in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the head,"* i. e. thereby disclaiming Christ, the head of the church. But, notwithstanding this warning, this error still continued and spread itself in those parts for several ages, till expressly condemned by the Laodicean council. Nay, Theodoret tells us, there were still oratories erected to the archangel Michael in those places, wherein they were wont to meet and pray to angels. Another Gnostic principle was, that men might freely and indifferently eat what had been offered in sacrifice to idols; yea, sacrifice to the idol itself, it being lawful confidently to abjure the faith in time of persecution. The first part whereof St. Paul does largely and frequently discuss up and down his epistles; the latter, wherein the sting and poison

was more immediately couched, was craftily adapted to those times of suffering, and greedily swallowed by many, hereby drawn into apostacy. Against this our apostle antidotes the Christians, especially the Jewish converts, among whom the Gnostics had mixed themselves, that they would not suffer themselves to be drawn aside by "an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God:"† that notwithstanding sufferings and persecutions, they would "hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," (the Gnostic heretics;) remembering how severely God has threatened apostates, that "if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him," and "what a fearful thing it is thus to fall into the hands of the living God."‡

3. But besides this, Simon and his followers made the gate yet wider, maintaining a universal licence to sin; that men were free to do whatever they had a mind to; that to press the observance of good works was a bondage inconsistent with the liberty of the gospel; that so men did but believe in him and his dear Helen,§ they had no reason to regard law or prophets, but might do what they pleased, they should be saved by his grace, and not according to good works. Irenæus adds, (what a man might easily have inferred, had he never been told it,) that they lived in all lust and filthiness: as indeed whoever will take the pains to peruse the account that is given of them, will find that they wallowed in the most horrible and unheard of bestialities. These persons St. Paul does as particularly describe, as if he had named them, having once and again with tears warned the Philippians of them, that "they were enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."|| And elsewhere to the same effect, that they would "mark them that caused divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which they had learned, and avoid them; for they that were such, served not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, by good words and fair speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple."¶ This I doubt not he had in his eye, when he gave those caveats to the Ephesians, that "fornication, and all uncleanness, and inordinate desires, should not be once named amongst them, as became saints, nor filthiness nor unclean talking;" being assured by the Christian doctrine, that "no whoremonger, nor unclean person," &c. could be saved; that therefore, "they should let no man deceive them with vain words; these being the very things for which the wrath of God came upon the children of disobedience;" and accordingly it concerned them, "not to be partakers with them."‡ Plainly intimating, that this impure Gnostic crew (whose doctrines and practices he does here no less truly than lively represent) had begun by crafty and insinuating arts to screw itself into the church of Ephesus, cheating the people with subtle and flattering in-

* Heb. iii. 12.

† Heb. x. 23, 25, 31, 38.

‡ His mistress, in whom he said dwelt the original seed of all human souls.—Ed.

|| Phil. iii. 17, 18.

§ Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

¶ Eph. v. 3, 4, &c.

sinuations, probably persuading them that these things were but indifferent, and a part of that Christian liberty, wherein the gospel had instated them. By these and such like principles and practices (many whereof might be reckoned up) they corrupted the faith of Christians, distracted the peace of the church, stained and defiled the honor and purity of the best religion in the world.

4. But the greatest and most famous controversy that of all others in those times exercised the Christian church, was concerning the obligation that Christians were under to observe the law of Moses, as necessary to their justification and salvation. Which because a matter of so much importance, and which takes up so great a part of St. Paul's epistles, and the clearing whereof will reflect a great light upon them, we shall consider more at large: in order whereunto three things especially are to be inquired after, that is, the true state of the controversy, what the apostles determined in this matter, and what respect the most material passages in St. Paul's epistles, about justification and salvation, bear to this controversy. First, we shall inquire into the true state and nature of the controversy; and for this we are to know, that when Christianity was published to the world, it mainly prevailed among the Jews, they being generally the first converts to the faith. But having been brought up in a mighty reverence and veneration for the Mosaic institutions, and looking upon that economy as immediately contrived by God himself, delivered by angels, settled by their great master, Moses, received with the most solemn and sensible appearances of divine power and majesty, ratified by miracles, and entertained by all their forefathers as the peculiar prerogative of that nation, for so many ages and generations, they could not easily be brought off from it, or behold the gospel but with an evil eye, as an enemy that came to supplant and undermine this ancient and excellent institution.—Nay, those of them that were prevailed upon by the convictive power and evidence of the gospel, to embrace the Christian religion, yet could not get over the prejudice of education, but must still continue their observance of those legal rites and customs wherein they had been brought up. And, not content with this, they began magisterially to impose them upon others, even all the Gentile converts, as that without which they could never be accepted by God in this, or rewarded by him in another world. This controversy was first started at Antioch, a place not more remarkable for its own greatness than the vast numbers of Jews that dwelt there, enjoying great immunities granted them by the king of Syria. For after that Antiochus Epiphanes had destroyed Jerusalem, and laid waste the temple, the Jews generally flocked hither, where they were courteously entertained by his successors, the spoils of the temple restored to them for the enriching and adorning of their synagogue, and they made, equally with the Greeks, freemen of that city; by which means their numbers increased daily, partly by the resort of others from Judæa, partly by a numerous conversion of proselytes, whom they gained over to their religion. Accordingly Christianity, at its first setting out, found a very successful entertain-

ment in this place. And hither it was that some of the Jewish converts, being come down from Jerusalem, taught the Christians, that unless they observed circumcision, and the whole law of Moses, they could not be saved.* Paul and Barnabas, then at Antioch, observing the ill influence that this had upon the minds of men, (disturbing many at present, and causing the apostacy of some afterwards,) began vigorously to oppose this growing error; but not able to conjure down this spirit that had been raised up, they were despatched by the church at Antioch to consult the apostles and governors at Jerusalem about this matter: whither being come, they found the quarrel espoused, among others, by some converts of the sect of the Pharisees, (of all others the most zealous assertors of the Mosaic rites,) stiffly maintaining that besides the gospel, or the Christian religion, it was necessary for all converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, to keep to circumcision and the law of Moses. So that the state of the controversy between the orthodox and these Judaizing Christians was plainly this:—Whether circumcision and the observation of the Mosaic law, or only the belief and practice of Christianity, be necessary to salvation? The latter part of the question was maintained by the apostles; the former asserted by the Judaizing zealots, making the law of Moses equally necessary with the law of Christ; and no doubt pretending that whatever these men might preach at Antioch, yet the apostles were of another mind; whose sentence and resolution it was therefore thought necessary should be immediately known.

5. We are then next to consider what determination the apostolic synod at Jerusalem made of this matter; for a council of the apostles and rulers being immediately convened, and the question, by Paul and Barnabas, brought before them, the case was canvassed and debated on all hands; and at last it was resolved upon by their unanimous sentence and suffrage, that the Gentile converts were under no obligation to the Jewish law; that God had abundantly declared his acceptance of them, though strangers to the Mosaic economy; that they were sufficiently secured of their happiness and salvation by the grace of the gospel, wherein they might be justified and saved without circumcision or legal ceremonies, a yoke from which Christ had now set us free. But because the apostles did not think it prudent in these circumstances, too much to stir the exasperated humor of the Jews, (lest by straining the string too high at first they should endanger their revolting from the faith,) therefore they thought of some indulgence in the case; St. James, then bishop of Jerusalem, and probably president of the council, propounding this expedient, that for the present the Gentile converts should so far only comply with the humor of the Jews, as to “abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication.” Let us a little more distinctly survey the ingredients of this imposition. “Meats offered to idols,” or as St. James in his discourse styles them *αἰσχροματὰ τῶν εἰδωλῶν*, “the pollution of idols,” the word *αἰσχροματὰ*, properly denoting the meats that were polluted by

being consecrated to the idol. Thus we read of "polluted bread upon God's altar;" i. e. such probably as had been before offered to idols. So that these meats offered to the idols were parts of those sacrifices which the heathens offered to their gods, of the remaining portions whereof they usually made a feast in the idol-temple, inviting their friends thither, and sometimes their Christian friends to come along with them. This God had particularly forbidden the Jews by the law of Moses: "Thou shalt worship no other God; lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice."* And the not observing of this prohibition cost the Jews dear, when invited by the Moabites to the sacrifices of their gods, "they did eat with them, and bowed down to their gods."† Sometimes these remaining portions were sold for common use in the shambles, and bought by Christians; both which gave great offence to the zealous Jews, who looked upon it as a participation in the idolatries of the heathen: of both which our apostle discourses elsewhere at large, pressing Christians to "abstain from idolatry," both as to the idol-feasts, and the remainders of the sacrifice: from the former, as more immediately unlawful; from the latter, the sacrificial meats sold in the shambles, as giving offence to weak and undiscerning Christians. For though in itself "an idol was nothing in the world," and consequently no honor could be done it by eating what was offered to it; yet was it more prudent and reasonable to abstain, partly because flesh-meats have no peculiar excellency in them to commend us to God; partly because all men not being alike instructed in the knowledge of their liberty, their minds might be easily puzzled, their consciences entangled, the Gentiles by this means hardened in their idolatrous practices, and weak brethren offended; besides, though these things were in their own nature indifferent, and in a man's own power to do or to let alone, yet was it not convenient to make our liberty a snare to others, and to venture upon what was lawful, when it was plainly unedifying and inexpedient. "From blood;" this God forbade of old, and that some time before the giving of the law by Moses, that "they should not eat the flesh with the blood, which was the life thereof."‡ The mystery of which prohibition was to instruct men in the duties of mercy and tenderness even to brute beasts; but (as appears from what follows after) primarily designed by God as a solemn fence and bar against murder, and the effusion of human blood: a law afterwards renewed upon the Jews, and inserted into the body of the Mosaic precepts. "From things strangled;" that is, that they should abstain from eating of those beasts that died without letting blood, where the blood was not thoroughly drained from them; a prohibition grounded upon the reason of the former, and respecting a thing greatly abominable to the Jews, being so expressly forbidden in their law.¶ But it was not more offensive to the Jews than acceptable to the Gentiles, who were wont, with great art and care, to

strangle living creatures, that they might stew or dress them with their blood in them, as a point of curious and exquisite delicacy. This and the foregoing prohibition, abstinence from blood, died not with the apostles, nor were buried with other Jewish rites, but were inviolably observed for several ages in the Christian church, as we have elsewhere observed from the writers of those times. Lastly, "From fornication:" this was a thing commonly practised in the heathen world, which generally beheld simple fornication as no sin, and that it was lawful for persons, not engaged in wedlock, to make use of women that exposed themselves; a custom justly offensive to the Jews, and therefore to cure two evils at once, the apostles here solemnly declare against it. Not that they thought it a thing indifferent, as the rest of the prohibited rites were; for it is forbidden by the natural law, (as contrary to that chasteness and modesty, that order and comeliness which God has planted in the minds of men,) but they joined it in the same class with them, because the Gentiles looked upon it as a thing lawful and indifferent. It had been expressly forbidden by the Mosaic law: "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel;"* and because the heathens had generally thrown down this fence and bar set by the law of nature, it was here again repaired by the first planters of Christianity, as by St. Paul elsewhere: "Ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus; for this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, which knew not God."†—Though, after all, I must confess myself inclinable to embrace Heinsius's ingenious conjecture, that by πορνεία, fornication, we are here to understand πορνής μισθωμα, "the harlots' hire," or the πορνικὴ θυσία, the offerings which those persons were wont to make. For among the Gentiles nothing was more usual, than for the common women that prostituted themselves to lewd embraces (those especially that attended at the temples of Venus) to dedicate some part of their gain, and present it to the gods. Athanasius has a passage very express to this purpose. "The women of old were wont to sit in the idol temples of Phœnicia, and to dedicate the gain which they got by the prostitution of their bodies as a kind of first-fruits to the deities of the place; supposing that by fornication they should pacify their goddess, and by this means render her favorable and propitious to them." Where it is plain he uses πορνεία, or fornication, in this very sense, for that gain or reward of it which they consecrated to their gods. Some such thing Solomon had in his eye, when he brings in the harlot thus courting the young man: "I have peace-offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows."‡ These presents were either made in specie, the very money thus unrighteously gotten, or in sacrifices bought with it, and offered at the temple, the remainders whereof were taken and sold among the ordinary sacrificial portions. This as it holds the nearest corres-

* Exod. xxxiv. 14, 15. † Numb. xxiv. 2, 4.
‡ Gen. ix. 4. ¶ Lev. xvii. 10, 11, 12, &c.

* Deut. xxiii. 17. † 1 Thess. iv. 2, 3, 4, 5.
‡ Prov. vii. 14.

pondence with the rest of the rites here forbidden, so could it not choose but be a mighty scandal to the Jews, it being so particularly prohibited in their law, "Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow, for it is an abomination to the Lord."*

6. These prohibitions here laid upon the Gentiles, were by the apostles intended only for a temporary compliance with the Jewish converts, till they could, by degrees, be brought off from their stiffness and obstinacy; and then the reason of the thing ceasing, the obligation to it must needs cease and fail. Nay, we may observe that even while the apostolical decree lasted in its greatest force and power, in those places where there were few or no Jewish converts, the apostles did not stick to give leave, that except in case of scandal, any kind of meats, even the portions of the idol-sacrifices might be indifferently bought and taken by Christians as well as heathens. These were all which in order to the satisfaction of the Jews, and for the present peace of the church, the apostles thought necessary to require of the converted Gentiles; but that for all the rest they were perfectly free from legal observances, obliged only to the commands of Christianity. So that the apostolical decision that was made of this matter was this:—"That (besides the temporary observation of those few indifferent rites before mentioned) the belief and practice of the Christian religion was perfectly sufficient to salvation, without circumcision and the observation of the Mosaic law." This synodical determination allayed the controversy for a while, being joyfully received by the Gentile-Christians. But, alas, the Jewish zeal began again to ferment and spread itself; they could not with any patience endure to see their beloved Moses deserted, and those venerable institutions trodden down, and therefore labored to keep up their credit, and still to assert them as necessary to salvation. Than which nothing created St. Paul greater trouble at every turn, as he was thereby forced to contend against these Judaizing teachers almost in every church where he came; as appears by that great part that they bear in all his epistles, especially that to the Romans and Galatians, where this leaven had most diffused itself, whom the better to undeceive, he discourses at large of the nature and institution, the end and design, the antiquating and abolishing of that Mosaic covenant, which these men laid so much stress and weight upon.

7. Hence then we pass to the third thing considerable for the clearing of this matter, which is to show, that the main passages in St. Paul's epistles, concerning justification and salvation, have an immediate reference to this controversy. But before we enter upon that, something must necessarily be premised for the explicating some terms and phrases frequently used by our apostle in this question; these two especially—what he means by law, and what by faith. By law, then, it is plain he usually understands the Jewish law, which was a complex body of laws, containing moral, ceremonial, and judicial precepts, each of which had its use and office as a great instrument of duty; the judicial laws being peculiar statutes

accommodated to the state of the Jews' commonwealth, as all civil constitutions, restrained men from the external acts of sin; the ceremonial laws came somewhat nearer, and besides their typical relation to the evangelical state, by external and symbolical representations, signified and exhibited that spiritual impurity, from which men were to abstain: the moral laws, founded in the natural notions of men's minds concerning good and evil, directly urged men to duty, and prohibited their prevarications. These three made up the entire code and pandects of the Jewish statutes; all of which our apostle comprehends under the general notion of "the law," and not the moral law singly and separately considered, in which sense it never appears that the Jews expected justification and salvation by it; nay, rather that they looked for it merely from the observance of the ritual and ceremonial law; so that the moral law is no further considered by him in this question, than as it made up a part of the Mosaic constitution, of that national and political covenant which God made with the Jews at Mount Sinai. Hence, the apostle all along in his discourses constantly opposes the law and the gospel, and the observation of the one to the belief and practice of the other; which surely he would not have done, had he simply intended the moral law, it being more expressly incorporated into the gospel than ever it was into the law of Moses. And that the apostle does thus oppose the law and gospel, might be made evident from the continued series of his discourses; but a few places shall suffice. "By what law (says the apostle) is boasting excluded? by the law of works?"* i. e. by the Mosaic law, in whose peculiar privileges and prerogatives the Jews did strangely flatter and pride themselves? "Nay, but by the law of faith,"† i. e. by the gospel, or the evangelical way of God's dealing with us. And elsewhere giving an account of this very controversy between the Jewish and Gentile converts, he first opposes their persons, "Jews by nature," and "sinners of the Gentiles;" and then infers, "that a man is not justified by the works of the law," by those legal observances whereby the Jews expected to be justified, "but by the faith of Christ," by a hearty belief of, and compliance with that way which Christ has introduced; for "by the works of the law," by legal obedience, "no flesh," neither Jew nor Gentile, "shall" now "be justified." "Fain would I learn, whether you received the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"‡ That is, whether you became partakers of the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, while you continued under the legal dispensation, or since you embraced the gospel, and the faith of Christ; and speaking afterwards of the state of the Jews before the revelation or the gospel, says he, "before faith came, we were kept under the law;"§ i. e. before the gospel came, we were kept under the discipline of the legal economy, "shut up unto the faith," reserved for the discovery of the evangelical dispensation, "which should afterwards" (in its due time) "be revealed" to the world. This in the following chapter he discourses more at large. "Tell me,

* Deut. xxiii. 18.

* Rom. iii. 27. † Gal. ii. 15, 16. ‡ Gal. iii. 2—5
§ Ver. 23.

ye that desire to be under the law ;”* i. e. Ye Jews that so fondly dote upon the legal state, “do ye not hear the law?” i. e. understand what your own law does so clearly intimate? and he then goes on to unriddle what was wrapped up in the famous allegory of Abraham’s two sons by his two wives; the one Ishmael, born of Hagar, the bond-woman, who denoted the Jewish covenant made at Mount Sinai, which according to the representation of her condition was a servile state; the other, Isaac, born of Sarah, the free-woman, was the son of the promise, denoting “Jerusalem that is above, and is free, the mother of us all;” i. e. the state and covenant of the gospel, whereby all Christians, as the spiritual children of Abraham, are set free from the bondage of the Mosaic dispensation. By all which it is evident, that by law and the works of the law, in this controversy, the apostle understands the law of Moses, and that obedience which the legal dispensation required at their hands.

8. We are secondly to inquire, what the apostle means by faith; and he commonly uses it two ways. 1. More generally for the gospel, or that evangelical way of justification and salvation which Christ has brought in, in opposition to circumcision, and the observation of those rites by which the Jews expected to be justified; and this is plain from the preceding opposition, where faith, as denoting the gospel, is frequently opposed to the law of Moses. 2. Faith is taken more particularly for a practical belief, or such an assent to the evangelical revelation as produces a sincere obedience to the laws of it; and indeed, as concerned in this matter, is usually taken, not for this or that single virtue, but for the entire condition of the new covenant, as comprehending all that duty that it requires of us; than which nothing can be more plain and evident: “in Christ Jesus,” i. e. under the gospel, “neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision,” it is all one to justification, whether a man be circumcised or no; what then! “but faith, which worketh by love;”† which afterwards he explains thus, “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature;”‡ a renewed and divine temper of mind, and a new course and state of life. And lest all this should not be thought plain enough, he elsewhere tells us, that “circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping the commandments of God.”|| From which places there needs no skill to infer, that that faith whereby we are justified, contains in it a new disposition and state both of heart and life, and an observation of the laws of Christ; in which respect the apostle does, in the very same verse, expound “believing,” by “obeying of the gospel.”¶ Such, he assures us, was that very faith by which Abraham was justified, who, against all probabilities of reason, believed in God’s promise; “he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong,” &c. that is, he so firmly believed what God had promised, that he gave him the glory of his truth and faithfulness, his infinite power and ability to do all things. And how did he that! By acting suitably in a way of entire

resignation, and sincere obedience to the divine will and pleasure; so the apostle elsewhere more expressly, “by faith he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went.”* This faith (he tells us) “was imputed to Abraham for righteousness;”† that is, God, by virtue of the new covenant made in Christ, was graciously pleased to look upon this obedience (though in itself imperfect) as that for which he accounted him, and would deal with him as a just and a righteous man. And upon this account we find Abraham’s faith opposed to a perfect and unsinning obedience; for thus the apostle tells us, that “Abraham was justified by faith,”‡ in opposition to his being justified by such an absolute and complete obedience, as might have enabled him to challenge the reward by the strict laws of justice; whereas now his being pardoned and accepted by God in the way of a mean and imperfect obedience, it could not claim impunity, much less a reward, but must be entirely owing to the divine grace and favor.

9. Having thus cleared our way, by restoring these words to their genuine and native sense, we come to show, how the apostle in his discourses does all along refer to the original controversy between the Jewish and Gentile converts, whether justification was by the observation of the Mosaic law, or by the belief and practice of the gospel: and this will appear, if we consider the persons that he has to deal with, the way and manner of his arguing, and that there was then no other controversy on foot, to which these passages could refer. The persons whom he had to deal with, were chiefly of two sorts, pure Jews, and Jewish converts. Pure Jews were those that kept themselves wholly to the legal economy, and expected to be justified and saved in no other way than the observation of the law of Moses. Indeed they laid a more peculiar stress upon circumcision, because this having been added as the seal of that covenant which God made with Abraham, and the discriminating badge whereby they were to be distinguished from all other nations, they looked upon it as having a special efficacy in it to recommend them to the divine acceptance. Accordingly we find in their writings that they make this the main basis and foundation of their hope and confidence towards God. For they tell us, that the precept of circumcision is greater than all the rest, and equivalent to the whole law; that the reason why God hears the prayers of the Israelites, but not of the Gentiles or Christians, is for the virtue and merit of circumcision; yea, that “so great is the power and efficacy of the law of circumcision, that no man that is circumcised shall go to hell.” Nay, according to the idle and trifling humor of these men, they fetch down Abraham from the seat of the blessed, and place as porter at the gates of hell, upon no other errand than to keep circumcised persons from entering into that miserable place. However; nothing is more evident, than that circumcision was the fort and sanctuary wherein they ordinarily placed their security; and accordingly, we find St. Paul frequently disputing against circumcision, as virtually comprising, in their notion, the keeping of the whole Jewish law. Besides, to these literal

* Gal. iv. 21, et seq. † Gal. v. 6. ‡ Gal. vi. 15.
 || 1 Cor. vii. 19. § Rom. x. 13

* Heb. xi. 8. † Rom. iv. 22. ‡ Rom. iv. 2, 3, &c.

impositions of the law of Moses, the Pharisees had added many vain traditions and several superstitious usages of their own contrivance; in the observance whereof the people placed not a little confidence, as to that righteousness upon which they hoped to stand clear with heaven. Against all these our apostle argues, and sometimes by arguments peculiar to them alone. Jewish converts were those, who having embraced the Christian religion, did yet, out of a veneration to their ancient rites, make the observance of them equally necessary with the belief and practice of Christianity both to themselves and others. These last were the persons, who as they first started the controversy, so were they those against whom the apostle mainly opposed himself, endeavoring to dismount their pretences, and to beat down their opinions level with the ground.

10. This will yet further appear from the way and manner of the apostle's arguing, which plainly respects this controversy, and will be best seen in some particular instances of his reasonings. And first, he argues, that this way of justification urged by Jews and Jewish converts was inconsistent with the goodness of God, and his universal kindness to mankind; being so narrow and limited, that it excluded the far greatest part of the world. Thus, in the first three chapters of his epistle to the Romans, having proved at large that "the whole world," both Jew and Gentile, "were under a state of guilt," and consequently liable to the divine sentence and condemnation; he comes next to inquire by what means they may be delivered from this state of vengeance, and shows that it could not be by legal observances; but that now there was a way of righteousness or justification declared by Christ* in the gospel, (intimated also in the Old Testament,) extending to all, both Jews and Gentiles; whereby God, with respect to the satisfaction and expiation of Christ, is ready freely to pardon and justify all penitent believers; that therefore there was a way revealed in the gospel, whereby a man might be justified, without being beholden to the rites of the Jewish law, otherwise it would argue that God had very little care of the greatest part of men. "Is he God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith, Jew and Gentile" in the same evangelical way. The force of which argument lies in this, that that cannot be necessary to our justification, which excludes the greatest part of mankind from all possibility of being justified; (and this justification by the Mosaic law plainly does;) a thing by no means consistent with God's universal love and kindness to his creatures. Hence, the apostle magnifies the grace of the gospel, that it has broken down the partition wall, and made way for all nations to come in; that "now there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian nor Scythian;"† no difference in this respect, but "all one in Christ Jesus;"‡ all equally admitted to terms of pardon and justification, "in every nation, he that

fearth God and worketh righteousness being accepted with him."**

11. Secondly; he argues, that this Jewish way of justification could not be indispensably necessary, in that it had not been the constant way whereby good men in all ages had been justified and accepted with heaven. This he eminently proves from the instance of Abraham, whom the Scripture sets forth as "the father of the faithful," and the great exemplar of that way wherein all his spiritual seed, all true believers, were to be justified. Now, of him it is evident, that he was justified and accepted with God upon his practical belief of God's power and promise, before ever circumcision, and much more before the rest of the Mosaic institution was in being. "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned unto Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned, when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised,"† &c. The meaning whereof is plainly this, that pardon of sin cannot be entailed upon the way of the Mosaic law, it being evident that Abraham was justified and approved of God before he was circumcised, which was only added as a seal of the covenant between God and him, and a testimony of that acceptance with God which he had obtained before. And this way of God's dealing with Abraham, and in him with all his spiritual children, the legal institution could not make void, it being impossible that dispensation, which came so long after, should disannul the covenant which God had made with Abraham and his spiritual seed four hundred and thirty years before. Upon this account, as the apostle observes, the Scripture sets forth Abraham as the great type and pattern of justification, as "the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised."‡ "They, therefore, that are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham;"|| and, "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel" (this evangelical way of justifying) "unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith," who believe and obey, as Abraham did, "shall be blessed," pardoned and saved, "with faithful Abraham."¶ It might further be demonstrated, that this has ever been God's method of dealing with mankind, our apostle, in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, proving all along, by particular instances, that it was by such a faith as this, without any relation to the law of Moses, that good men were justified and accepted with God in all ages of the world.

12. Thirdly; he argues against this Jewish way of justification, from the deficiency and im-

* Rom. iii. 20, 21, &c. † Gal. iii. 28.
‡ Col. iii. 11.

* Acts x. 35. † Rom. iv. 9, 10, 11. ‡ Gal. iii. 17.
|| Rom. iv. 1, 12. § Gal. iii. 8, 9.

perfection of the Mosaic economy, not able to justify and save sinners. Deficient, as not able to assist those that were under it with sufficient aids to perform what it required of them: "This the law could not do, for that it was weak through the flesh," till "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," to enable us, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."* And, indeed, "could the law have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;"† but, alas! the Scripture having concluded all mankind, Jew and Gentile, under sin, and consequently incapable of being justified upon terms of perfect and entire obedience; there is now no other way but this, that "the promise by the faith of Christ be given to all them that believe;" i. e. this evangelical method of justifying sincere believers. Besides, the Jewish economy was deficient in pardoning sin, and procuring the grace and favor of God; it could only awaken the knowledge of sin, not remove the guilt of it: "It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;"‡ all the sacrifices of the Mosaic law were no further available for the pardon of sin, than merely as they were founded in, and had respect to that great sacrifice and expiation which was to be made for the sins of mankind by the death of the Son of God. "The priests, though they daily ministered, and oftentimes offered the same sacrifices, yet could they never take away sins."|| No, that was reserved for a better and a higher sacrifice, even that of our Lord himself, who, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God," having completed that which the repeated sacrifices of the law could never effect. So that all men being under guilt, and no justification, where there was no remission, the Jewish economy being in itself unable to pardon, was incapable to justify. This St. Paul elsewhere declared in an open assembly before Jews and Gentiles; "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man" (Christ Jesus) "is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."¶

13. Fourthly; he proves that justification by the Mosaic law could not stand with the death of Christ; the necessity of whose death and sufferings it did plainly evacuate and take away; for, "if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."‡ If the Mosaic performances be still necessary for our justification, then certainly it was to very little purpose, and altogether unbecoming the wisdom and goodness of God, to send his own Son into the world, to do so much for us, and to suffer such exquisite pains and tortures. Nay, he tells them, that while they persisted in this fond obstinate opinion, all that Christ had done and suffered could be of no advantage to them. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage,"*** the bondage and servitude of the Mosaic rites. "Behold, I

Paul," solemnly "say unto ye, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing: for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law; Christ is become of none effect to you; whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." The sum of which argument is, that whoever lay the stress of their justification upon circumcision and the observances of the law, do thereby declare themselves to be under an obligation of perfect obedience to all that the law requires of them, and accordingly supersede the virtue and efficacy of Christ's death, and disclaim all right and title to the grace and favor of the gospel. For, since Christ's death is abundantly sufficient to attain its ends, whoever takes in another, plainly renounces this, and rests upon that of his own choosing. By these ways of reasoning, it is evident what the apostle drives at in all his discourses about this matter. More might have been observed, had I not thought that these are sufficient to render his design, especially to the unprejudiced and impartial, obvious and plain enough.

14. Lastly; that St. Paul's discourses about justification and salvation do immediately refer to the controversy between the orthodox and Judaizing Christians, appears hence, that there was no other controversy then on foot, but concerning the way of justification, whether it was by the observation of the law of Moses, or only of the gospel and the law of Christ. For we must needs suppose, that the apostle wrote with a primary respect to the present state of things, and so as they whom he had to deal with, might and could not but understand him: which yet would have been impossible for them to have done, had he intended them for the controversies which have since been handled with so much zeal and fierceness, and to give countenance to those many nice and subtle propositions, those curious and elaborate schemes which some men, in these later ages, have drawn of these matters.

15. From the whole discourse two consecutaries especially plainly follow. I. CONJECT.—*That works of evangelical obedience are not opposed to faith in justification.* By works of evangelical obedience, I mean such Christian duties as are the fruits, not of our own power and strength, but God's Spirit, done by the assistance of his grace. And that these are not opposed to faith, is undeniably evident, in that (as we observed before) faith, as including the new nature, and the keeping God's commands, is made the usual condition of justification. Nor can it be otherwise, when other graces and virtues of the Christian life are made the terms of pardon and acceptance with heaven, and of our title to the merits or Christ's death, and the great promise of eternal life. Thus repentance, which is not so much a single act, as a complex body of Christian duties, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost:"** "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."† So charity and forgiveness of others: "Forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your Father also, which is in

* Rom. viii. 3, 4. † Gal. iii. 21. ‡ Heb. x. 4.

|| Ibid. v. 11, 12. § Acts xiii. 38, 39. ¶ Gal. ii. 21.

** Gal. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

* Acts ii. 38.

† Ibid. iii. 17.

heaven, may forgive you your trespasses :”* “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you : but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours.”† Sometimes evangelical obedience in general : “God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.”‡ “If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.”|| What privilege then has faith above other graces in this matter ? are we justified by faith ? We are pardoned and accepted with God upon our repentance, charity, and other acts of evangelical obedience. Is faith opposed to the works of the Mosaic law in justification ? so are works of evangelical obedience : “circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping the commandments of God.”§ Does faith give glory to God, and set the crown upon his head ? works of evangelical obedience are equally the effects of divine grace, both preventing and assisting of us, and indeed are not so much our works as his : so that the glory of all must needs be entirely resolved into the grace of God ; nor can any man in such circumstances, with the least pretence of reason, lay claim to merit, or boast of his own achievements. Hence the apostle magnifies the evangelical method of justification above that of the law, that it wholly excludes all proud reflections upon ourselves : “Where is boasting then ? it is excluded. By what law ? of works ? Nay, but by the law of faith.”¶ The Mosaic economy fostered men up in proud and high thoughts of themselves ; they looked upon themselves as a peculiar people, honored above all other nations of the world, the seed of Abraham, invested with mighty privileges, &c. Whereas the gospel, proceeding upon other principles, takes away all foundations of pride, by acknowledging our acceptance with God, and the power whereby we are enabled to make good the terms and conditions of it, to be the mere result of the divine grace and mercy, and that the whole scheme of our salvation, as it was the contrivance of the divine wisdom, so is the purchase of the merit and satisfaction of our crucified Saviour. Nor is faith itself less than other graces an act of evangelical obedience, and if separated from them is of no moment or value in the accounts of heaven : “Though I have all faith and have no charity, I am nothing.”*** “All faith,” he it of what kind soever. To this may be added, that no tolerable account can be given, why that which is on all hands granted to be the condition of our salvation (such is evangelical obedience) should not be the condition of our justification ; and at the great day Christians shall be acquitted or condemned according as in this world they have fulfilled or neglected the conditions of the gospel : the decretory sentence of absolution that shall then be passed upon good men, shall be nothing but a public and solemn declaration of that private sentence

of justification that was passed upon them in this world ; so that upon the same terms that they are justified now, they shall be justified and acquitted then, and upon the same terms that they shall then be judged and acquitted they are justified now, viz. a hearty belief of, and a sincere obedience to the gospel. From all which, I hope, it is evident, that when St. Paul denies men to be justified by the works of the law, by the works he either means works done before conversion, and by the strength of men’s natural powers, such as enabled them to pride and boast themselves, and lay claim to merit, or (which most what includes the other) the works of the Mosaic law. And indeed though the controversies on foot in those times did not plainly determine his reasonings that way, yet the considerations which we have now suggested, sufficiently show that they could not be meant of any other sense.

16. CONJECT. II.—*That the doctrines of St. Paul and St. James about justification are fairly consistent with each other.* For seeing St. Paul’s design, in excluding works from justification, was only to deny the works of the Jewish law, or those that were meritorious as being wrought by our own strength, and in asserting, that in opposition to such works we are “justified by faith,” he meant no more than that either we are justified in an evangelical way, or more particularly by faith intended a practical belief, including evangelical obedience : and seeing, on the other hand, St. James in affirming “that we are justified by works, and not by faith only ;” by works, means no more than evangelical obedience, in opposition to a naked and an empty faith ; these two are so far from quarreling that they mutually embrace each other, and both in the main pursue the same design. And indeed if any disagreement seem between them, it is most reasonable that St. Paul should be expounded by St. James, not only because his propositions are so express and positive, and not justly liable to ambiguity, but because he wrote some competent time after the other, and consequently as he perfectly understood his meaning, so he was capable to countermine those ill principles which some men had built upon St. Paul’s assertions. For it is evident, from several passages in St. Paul’s epistles, that even then many began to mistake his doctrine, and from his assertions about justification by faith, and not by works, to infer propositions that might serve the purposes of a bad life ; “they slanderously reported him to say, that we might do evil, that good might come ;”* “that we might continue in sin, that the grace of the gospel might the more abound.”† They thought that so long as they did but believe the gospel in the naked notion and speculation of it, it was enough to recommend them to the favor of God, and to serve all the purposes of justification and salvation, however they shaped and steered their lives. Against these men it is beyond all question plain, that St. James levels his epistle, to batter down the growing doctrines of libertinism and profaneness, to show the insufficiency of a naked faith, and an empty profession of religion, that it is not enough to recommend us to the divine acceptance, and to justify

* Mark xi. 25, 26.

† Matt. vi. 14, 15.

‡ Acts x. 34, 35.

|| I John, i. 7.

§ I Cor. vii. 19.

¶ Rom. iii. 27.

** I Cor. xiii. 2.

* Rom. iii. 8.

† Rom. vi. 1.

us in the sight of heaven, barely to believe the gospel, unless we really obey and practise it;* that a faith destitute of this evangelical obedience is fruitless and unprofitable to salvation; that it is by these works that faith must appear to be vital and sincere; that not only Rahab but Abraham, the father of the faithful, was justified not by a bare belief of God's promise, but a hearty obedience to God's command, in the ready offer of his son, whereby it appears that his faith and obedience did co-operate and conspire together, to render him capable of God's favor and approbation; and that "herein the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness;" (whence, by the way, nothing can be clearer, than that both these apostles intend the same thing by faith, in the case of Abraham's justification, and its being "imputed to him for righteousness;" viz. a practical belief and obedience to the commands of God;) that it follows hence, that faith is not of itself sufficient to justify and make us acceptable to God, unless a proportionable obedience be joined with it; without which faith serves no more to these ends and purposes, than a body destitute of the soul to animate and enliven it, is capable to exercise the functions and offices of the natural life. His meaning, in short, being nothing else than that good works, or evangelical obedience, is, according to the divine appointment, the condition of the gospel-covenant, without which it is in vain for any to hope for that pardon which Christ hath purchased, and for that favor of God, which is necessary to eternal life.

ST. ANDREW.

THE sacred story, which has hitherto been very large and copious in describing the acts of the first two apostles, is henceforward very sparing in its accounts, giving us only now and then a few oblique and accidental remarks concerning the rest, and some of them no further mentioned than the mere recording of their names. For what reasons it pleased the Divine wisdom and providence, that no more of their acts should be consigned to writing by the penmen of the holy story is to us unknown. Probably it might be thought convenient that no more account should be given of the first plantations of Christianity in the world than what concerned Judæa, and the neighboring countries, at least the most eminent places of the Roman empire; that so the truth of the prophetic predictions might appear, which had foretold that the law of the Messiah "should come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Besides which, a particular relation of the acts of so many apostles, done in so many several countries, might have swelled the holy volumes into too great a bulk, and rendered them less serviceable and accommodate to the ordinary use of Christians. Among the apostles that succeed we first take notice of St. Andrew. He was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, standing upon the

banks of the lake of Genesareth, son to John, or Jonas, a fisherman of that town; brother he was to Simon Peter, but whether elder or younger the ancients do not clearly decide, though the major part intimate him to have been the younger brother, there being only the single authority of Epiphanius on the other side, as we have formerly noted. He was brought up to his father's trade, whereat he labored, till our Lord called him from catching fish, to be a "fisher of men," for which he was fitted by some preparatory institutions, even before his coming unto Christ.

2. John the Baptist was lately risen in the Jewish church; a person whom, for the efficacy and impartiality of his doctrine, and the extraordinary strictness and austerities of his life, the Jews generally had in great veneration. He trained up his proselytes under the discipline of repentance, and by urging upon them a severe change and reformation of life, prepared them to entertain the doctrine of the Messiah, whose approach, he told them, was now near at hand; representing to them the greatness of his person, and the importance of the design that he was come upon. Besides the multitudes that promiscuously flocked to the Baptist's discourses, he had, according to the manner of the Jewish masters, some peculiar and select disciples, who more constantly attended upon his lectures, and for the most part waited upon his person. In the number of these was our apostle, who was then with him about Jordan, when our Saviour, who some time since had been baptized, came that way; upon whose approach the Baptist told them, that this was the Messiah, the great person whom he had so often spoken of, to usher in whose appearing his whole ministry was but subservient; that this was "the Lamb of God," the true sacrifice that was to expiate the sins of mankind. Upon this testimony Andrew and another disciple (probably St. John) follow our Saviour to the place of his abode: upon which account he is generally, by the fathers and ancient writers, styled the "first called" disciple; though in a strict sense he was not so; for though he was the first of the disciples that came to Christ, yet was he not called till afterwards. After some converse with him, Andrew goes to acquaint his brother Simon, and both together came to Christ. Long they staid not with him, but returned to their own home, and to the exercise of their calling, wherein they were employed; when somewhat more than a year after, our Lord, passing through Galilee, found them fishing upon the sea of Tiberias, where he fully satisfied them of the greatness and divinity of his person, by the convictive evidence of that miraculous draught of fishes which they took at his command. And now he told them he had other work for them to do; that they should no longer deal in fish, but in men, whom they should catch with the efficacy and influence of that doctrine that he was come to deliver to the world; commanding them to follow him, as his immediate disciples and attendants, who accordingly left all and followed him. Shortly after, St. Andrew, together with the rest, was called to the office and honor of the apostolate, made choice of to be one of those that were to be Christ's immediate vicegerents for planting and propagating the Christian church. Little else is particularly

* Vid. chap. ii. ver. 14, 15, et seq.

recorded of him in the sacred story, being comprehended in the general account of the rest of the apostles.

3. After our Lord's ascension into heaven, and that the Holy Ghost had, in its miraculous powers, been plentifully shed upon the apostles, to fit them for the great errand they were to go upon, to root out profaneness and idolatry, and to subdue the world to the doctrine of the gospel, it is generally affirmed by the ancients, that the apostles agreed among themselves, (by lot say some,) probably not without the special guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, what parts of the world they should severally take. In this division St. Andrew had Scythia and the neighboring countries primarily allotted him for his province. First, then, he travelled through Capadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia, and instructed them in the faith of Christ; passing all along the Euxine sea, (formerly called Axenus, from the barbarous and inhospitable temper of the people thereabouts, who were wont to sacrifice strangers, and of their skulls to make cups to drink in at their feasts and banquets,) and so into the solitudes of Scythia. An ancient author, (though whence deriving his intelligence I know not) gives us a more particular account of his travels and transactions in these parts. He tells us, that he first came to Amynsus, where being entertained by a Jew, he went into the synagogue, discoursed to them concerning Christ, and from the prophecies of the Old Testament proved him to be the Messiah, and the Saviour of the world. Having here converted and baptized many, ordered their public meeting, and ordained them priests, he went next to Trapezus, a maritime city upon the Euxine sea; whence, after many other places, he came to Nice, where he staid two years, preaching and working miracles with great success; thence to Nicomedia, and so to Chalcedon; whence sailing through the Propontis he came by the Euxine sea to Heraclea, and from thence to Amastris: in all which places he met with great difficulties and discouragements, but overcame all with an invincible patience and resolution. He next came to Sinope, a city situated upon the same sea, a place famous both for the birth and burial of the great king Mithridates; here, as my author reports from the ancients, he met with his brother Peter, with whom he staid a considerable time at this place: as a monument whereof, he tells us, that the chairs made of white stone, wherein they were wont to sit while they taught the people, were still extant, and commonly showed in his time. The inhabitants of this city were most Jews, who partly through zeal for their religion, partly through the barbarousness of their manners, were quickly exasperated against the apostle, and contriving together, attempted to burn the house wherein he sojourned; however, they treated him with all the instances of savage cruelty, throwing him to the ground, stamping upon him with their feet, pulling and dragging him from place to place, some beating him with clubs, others pelting him with stones; and some, the better to satisfy their revenge, biting off his flesh with their teeth; till apprehending they had fully despatched him, they cast him out of the city. But he miraculously recovered, and publicly returned into the city, whereby, and by some other miracles which he

wrought amongst them, he reduced many to a better mind, converting them to the faith. Departing hence, he went again to Amynsus, and then to Trapezus, thence to Neocæsarea, and to Samosata, (the birth-place of the witty but impious Lucian,) where having baffled the acute and wise philosophers, he purposed to return to Jerusalem. Whence, after some time, he betook himself to his former provinces, travelling to the country of the Abasgi, where at Sebastople, situate upon the eastern shore of the Euxine sea, between the influx of the rivers Phasis and Apsarus, he successfully preached the gospel to the inhabitants of that city. Hence he removed into the country of the Zecchi, and the Bosphorani, part of the Asiatic Scythia, or Sarmatia; but finding the inhabitants very barbarous and intractable, he stayed not long among them, only at Cherson or Chersonesus, a great and populous city within the Bosphorus; he continued some time, instructing and confirming them in the faith. Hence, taking ship, he sailed across the sea to Sinope, situate in Paphlagonia, the royal seat of the great king Mithridates, to encourage and confirm the churches which he had lately planted in those parts; and here he ordained Philologus, formerly one of St. Paul's disciples, bishop of that city.

4. Hence he came to Byzantium, (since called Constantinople,) where he instructed them in the knowledge of the Christian religion, founded a church for divine worship, and ordained Stachys (whom St. Paul calls "his beloved Stachys") first bishop of that place. Baronius, indeed, is unwilling to believe this, desirous to engross the honor of it to St. Peter, whom he will have to have been the first planter of Christianity in these parts. But besides that Baronius's authority is very slight and insignificant in this case, (as we have before noted in St. Peter's life,) this matter is expressly asserted not only by Nicephorus Callistus, but by another Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople, and who therefore may be presumed knowing in his predecessors in that see. Banished out of the city by him who at that time usurped the government, he fled to Argyropolis, a place near at hand, where he preached the gospel for two years together with good success, converting great numbers to the faith. After this he travelled over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia; Nazianzen adds Epirus, in all which places for many years he preached and propagated Christianity, and confirmed the doctrine that he taught with great signs and miracles. At last he came to Patræ, a city of Achaia, where he gave his last and great testimony to it; I mean laid down his own life to ratify and ensure it. In describing his martyrdom we shall, for the main, follow the account that is given us in the "Acts of his Passion," pretended to have been written by the presbyters and deacons of Achaia, present at his martyrdom; which, though I dare not with some assert to be the genuine work of those persons, yet can it not be denied to be of considerable antiquity, being mentioned by Philastrius, who flourished anno 380, and were no doubt written long before his time. The sum of it is this.

5. Ægeas, proconsul of Achaia, came at this time to Patræ, where observing that multitudes were fallen off from paganism, and had embraced Chris-

tianity, he endeavored by all arts both of favor and cruelty to reduce the people to their old idolatries. To him the apostle resolutely makes his address, calmly puts him in mind, that he, being but a judge of men, should own and revere him who was the supreme and impartial judge of all, that he should give him that divine honor which was due to him, and leave off the impieties of his false heathen worship. The proconsul derided him as an innovator in religion, a propagator of that superstition, whose author the Jews had infamously put to death upon a cross. Hereat the apostle took occasion to discourse to him of the infinite love and kindness of our Lord, who came into the world to purchase the salvation of mankind, and for that end did not disdain to die upon the cross. To whom the proconsul answered, that he might persuade them so that would believe him; for his part, if he did not comply with him in doing sacrifice to the gods, he would cause him to suffer upon that cross which he had so much extolled and magnified. St. Andrew replied, that he did sacrifice every day to God, the only true and Omnipotent Being, not with fumes and bloody offerings, but in the sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God. The issue was, the apostle was committed to prison; whereat the people were so enraged, that it had broken out into a mutiny had not the apostle restrained them, persuading them to imitate the mildness and patience of our meek humble Saviour, and not to hinder him from that crown of martyrdom that now waited for him.

6. The next day he was again brought before the proconsul, who persuaded him that he would not foolishly destroy himself, but live and enjoy with him the pleasures of this life. The apostle told him, that he should have with him eternal joys, if, renouncing his execrable idolatries, he would heartily entertain Christianity, which he had hitherto so successfully preached amongst them. That, answered the proconsul, is the very reason why I am so earnest with you to sacrifice to the gods, that those whom you have every where seduced, may by your example be brought to return back to that ancient religion which they have forsaken: otherwise I will cause you with exquisite tortures to be crucified. The apostle replied, that now he saw it was in vain any longer to deal with him, a person incapable of sober counsels, and hardened in his own blindness and folly; that as for himself, he might do his worst, and if he had one torment greater than another, he might heap that upon him: the greater constancy he showed in his sufferings for Christ, the more acceptable he should be to his Lord and master. Ægeas could now hold no longer, but passed the sentence of death upon him; and Nicephorus gives us some more particular account of the proconsul's displeasure and rage against him, which was, that amongst others he had converted his wife, Maximilla, and his brother, Stratocles, to the Christian faith, having cured them of desperate distempers that had seized upon them.

7. The proconsul first commanded him to be scourged, seven lictors sufficiently whipping his naked body; and seeing his invincible patience and constancy, commanded him to be crucified, but not to be fastened to the cross with nails, but cords, that so his death might be more lingering

and tedious. As he was led to execution, to which he went with a cheerful and composed mind, the people cried out, that he was an innocent and good man, and unjustly condemned to die. Being come within sight of the cross, he saluted it with this kind of address, that he had long desired and expected this happy hour, that the cross had been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it, and adorned with his members as with so many inestimable jewels, that he came joyful and triumphing to it, that it might receive him as a disciple and follower of him who once hung upon it, and be the means to carry him safe unto his master, having been the instrument upon which his master had redeemed him. Having prayed, and exhorted the people to constancy and perseverance in that religion which he had delivered to them, he was fastened to the cross, whereon he hung two days, teaching and instructing the people all the time; and when great importunities, in the mean while, were used to the proconsul to spare his life, he earnestly begged of our Lord, that he might at this time depart and seal the truth of his religion with his blood. God heard his prayer, and he immediately expired, on the last of November, though in what year no certain account can be recovered.

8. There seems to have been something peculiar in that cross that was the instrument of his martyrdom, commonly affirmed to have been a cross decussate, two pieces of timber crossing each other in the middle, in the form of the letter X, hence usually known by the name of St. Andrew's cross; though there want not those who affirm him to have been crucified upon an olive-tree. His body being taken down and embalmed, was decently and honorably interred by Maximilla, a lady of great quality and estate, and whom Nicephorus, I know not upon what ground, makes wife to the proconsul. As for that report of Gregory, bishop of Tours, that on the anniversary day of his martyrdom, there was wont to flow from St. Andrew's tomb a most fragrant and precious oil, which according to its quantity denoted the scarceness or plenty of the following year; and that the sick being anointed with this oil were restored to their former health, I leave to the reader's discretion, to believe what he please of it. For my part, if there be any ground of truth in the story, I believe it to be no more than that it was an exhalation and sweating forth at some times of those rich costly perfumes and ointments wherewith his body was embalmed after his crucifixion. Though I must confess this conjecture to be impossible, if that be true which my author adds, that some years the oil burst out in such plenty, that the stream arose to the middle of the church. His body was afterwards, by Constantine the Great, solemnly removed to Constantinople, and buried in the great church, which he had built to the honor of the apostles; which being taken down some hundred years after, by Justinian the emperor, in order to its reparation, the body was found in a wooden coffin, and again reposed in its proper place.

9. I shall conclude the history of this apostle with that encomiastic character which one of the ancients gives of him. "St. Andrew was the first-born of the apostolic quire, the main and

prime pillar of the church, a rock before the rock, the foundation of that foundation, the first-fruits of the beginning, a caller of others before he was called himself; he preached that gospel that was not yet believed or entertained; revealed and made known that life to his brother, which he had not yet perfectly learned himself. So great treasures did that one question bring him, "Master where dwellest thou?" which he soon perceived by the answer given him, and which he deeply pondered in his mind, "Come and see." How art thou become a prophet? whence thus divinely skillful? what is it that thou thus soundest in Peter's ears? ["We have found him," &c.] why dost thou attempt to compass him, whom thou canst not comprehend? how can he be found who is omnipresent? But he knew well what he said: we have found him, whom Adam lost, whom Eve injured, whom the clouds of sin have hidden from us, and whom our transgressions had hitherto made a stranger to us," &c. So that of all our Lord's apostles St. Andrew had thus far the honor to be the first preacher of the gospel.

ST. JAMES THE GREAT.

ST. JAMES, surnamed the Great, either because of his age, being much elder than the other, or for some peculiar honors and favors which our Lord conferred upon him, was by country a Galilean, born, probably, either at Capernaum or Bethsaida, being one of Simon Peter's partners in the trade of fishing. He was the son of Zebdai or Zebedee, (and probably the same whom the Jews mention in their Talmud, "Rabbi James, or Jacob the son of Zebedee.") a fisherman; and the many servants which he kept for that employment, (a circumstance not taken notice of in any other,) speak him a man of some more considerable note in that trade and way of life. His mother's name was Mary, surnamed Salome, called first Taviphilia, says an ancient Arabic writer,† the daughter, as is most probable, not wife of Cleopas, sister to Mary, the mother of our Lord; not her own sister, properly so called, (the blessed virgin being, in all likelihood an only daughter,) but cousin-german, styled her sister, according to the mode and custom of the Jews, who were wont to call all such near relations by the names of brothers and sisters; and in this respect he had the honor of a near relation to our Lord himself. His education was in the trade of fishing. No employment is base that is honest and industrious; nor can it be thought mean and dishonorable to him, when it is remembered, that our Lord himself, the Son of God, stooped so low as not only to become the [reputed] son of a carpenter, but, during the retirements of his private life, to work himself at his father's trade, not devoting himself merely to contemplations, nor withdrawing from all useful society with the world, and hiding himself in the solitudes of an anchorite; but busying himself in an active course of life, working at the trade of a carpenter,‡ and particularly (as one of the an-

cients tells us) making ploughs and yokes. And this the sacred history does not only plainly intimate, but it is generally asserted by the ancient writers of the church; a thing so notorious, that the heathens used to object it as a reproach to Christianity. Thence that smart and acute repartee which a Christian schoolmaster made to Libanius, the famous orator, at Antioch, when upon Julian's expedition into Persia, (where he was killed,) he asked in scorn, what the carpenter's son was now a-doing? The Christian replied with salt enough, that the great Artificer of the world, whom he scoffingly called the carpenter's son, was making a coffin for his master Julian; the news of whose death was brought soon after. But this only by the way.

2. St. James applied himself to his father's trade, not discouraged with the meanness, not sinking under the difficulties of it; and, as usually the blessings of heaven meet men in the way of an honest and industrious diligence, it was in the exercise of this calling, when our Saviour, passing by the sea of Galilee, saw him and his brother in the ship, and called them to be his disciples. A divine power went along with the word, which they no sooner heard but cheerfully complied with it, immediately leaving all to follow him. They did not stay to dispute his commands, to argue the probability of his promise, solicitously to inquire into the minute consequences of the undertaking, what troubles and hazards might attend this new employment, but readily delivered up themselves to whatever services he should appoint them. And the cheerfulness of their obedience is yet farther considerable, that they left their aged father in the ship behind them. For elsewhere we find others excusing themselves from an immediate attendance upon Christ, upon pretence that they must go bury their father, or take their leave of their kindred at home.* No such slight and trivial pretences could stop the resolution of our apostles, who broke through the considerations, and quitted their present interests and relations. Say not it was unnaturally done of them, to desert their father, an aged person, and in some measure unable to help himself. For, besides that they left servants with him to attend him, it is not cruelty to our earthly, but obedience to our heavenly Father, to leave the one that we may comply with the call and summons of the other. It was the triumph of Abraham's faith, when God called him to leave his kindred and his father's house, "to go out," and sojourn in a foreign country, "not knowing whither he went." Nor can we doubt but that Zebedee himself would have gone along with them, had not his age given him a supersedeas from such an active and ambulatory course of life. But though they left him at this time, it is very reasonable to suppose, that they took care to instruct him in the doctrine of the Messiah, and to acquaint him with the glad tidings of salvation; especially since we find their mother Salome so hearty a friend to, so constant a follower of our Saviour: but this (if we may believe the account which one gives of it) was after her husband's de-

* Mark i. 20.

† John xix. 25.

‡ Mark vi. 3; Matt. xiii. 55.

* Luke ix. 59—61.

sease, who probably lived not long after, dying before the time of our Saviour's passion.

3. It was not long after this, that he was called from the station of an ordinary disciple, to the apostolical office; and not only so, but honored with some peculiar acts of favor beyond most of the apostles, being one of the three whom our Lord usually made choice of to admit to the more intimate transactions of his life, from which the others were excluded. Thus, with Peter and his brother John, he was taken to the miraculous raising of Jairus's daughter; admitted to Christ's glorious transfiguration upon the mount, and the discourses that there passed between him and the two great ministers of heaven; taking along with him into the garden, to be a spectator of those bitter agonies, which the holy Jesus was to undergo as the preparatory sufferings to his passion. What were the reasons of our Lord's admitting these three apostles to these more special acts of favor than the rest is not easy to determine; though surely our Lord, who governed all his actions by principles of the highest prudence and reason, did it for wise and proper ends; whether it was that he designed these three to be more solemn and peculiar witnesses of some particular passages of his life than the other apostles, or that they would be more eminently useful and serviceable in some parts of the apostolic office, or that hereby he would the better prepare and encourage them against suffering, as intending them for some more eminent kinds of martyrdom or suffering than the rest were to undergo.

4. Nor was it the least instance of that particular honor which our Lord conferred upon these three apostles, that at his calling them to the apostolate, he gave them the addition of a new name and title. A thing not unusual of old, for God to impose a new name upon persons, when designing them for some great and peculiar services and employments. Thus he did to Abraham and Jacob. Nay, the thing was customary among the Gentiles, as, had we no other instances, might appear from those which the Scripture gives us: Pharaoh's giving a new name to Joseph, when advancing him to be viceroy of Egypt; Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel, &c. Thus did our Lord in the election of these three apostles; "Simon he surnamed Peter, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother he surnamed Boanerges,"* which is, "the sons of thunder." What our Lord particularly intended in this title, is easier to conjecture than certainly to determine; some think it was given them upon the account of their being present in the mount, when a voice came out of the cloud, and said, "This is my beloved Son,"† &c. The like whereto when the people heard at another time, they cried out, "that it thundered."‡ But besides that this account is in itself very slender and inconsiderable; if so, then the title must equally have belonged to Peter, who was then present with them. Others think it was upon the account of their loud, bold, and resolute preaching Christianity to the world, fearing no threatenings, daunted with no oppositions, but going on to "thunder" in the ears of the secure sleepy world, rousing and awakening

the consciences of men with the earnestness and vehemency of their preaching; as thunder, which is called "God's voice," powerfully shakes the natural world, and breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon: or if it relate to the doctrines they delivered, it might signify their teaching the great mysteries and speculations of the gospel in a profounder strain than the rest; which how true it might be of our St. James, the Scripture is wholly silent; but was certainly verified of his brother John, whose gospel is so full of the more sublime notions and mysteries of the gospel concerning Christ's Deity, eternal pre-existence, &c., that he is generally affirmed by the ancients, not so much to "speak," as thunder.* Probably the expression may denote no more, than that in general they were to be prime and eminent ministers, in this new scene and state of things; the introducing of the gospel or evangelical dispensation, being called "a voice shaking the heavens and the earth," and so is exactly correspondent to the native importance of the word, signifying "an earthquake," or a vehement commotion that makes a noise like to thunder.

5. However it was, our Lord, I doubt not, herein had respect to the furious and resolute disposition of those two brothers, who seem to have been of a more fierce and fiery temper than the rest of the apostles; whereof we have this memorable instance. Our Lord being resolved upon his journey to Jerusalem, sent some of his disciples as harbingers to prepare his way, who coming to a village of Samaria, were uncivilly rejected, and refused entertainment; probably because of that old and inveterate quarrel that was between the Samaritans and the Jews, and more especially at this time, because that our Saviour seemed to slight Mount Gerizim, (where was their staple and solemn place of worship,) by passing it by, to go and worship at Jerusalem; the reason in all likelihood why they denied him those common courtesies and conveniences due to all travellers. This piece of rudeness and inhumanity was presently so deeply resented by St. James and his brother, that they came to their master to know, whether as Elias did of old,† they might not pray down fire from heaven, to consume these barbarous and inhospitable people. So apt are men, for every trifle, to call upon heaven to minister to the extravagancies of their own impotent and unreasonable passions. But our Lord rebukes their zeal, tells them they quite mistook the case, that this was not the frame and temper of his disciples and followers, the nature and design of that evangelical dispensation that he was come to set on foot in the world, which was a more pure and perfect, a more mild and gentle institution, than what was under the Old Testament, in the times of "Moses and Elias; the Son of man being come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

6. The holy Jesus, not long after, set forwards in his journey to Jerusalem, in order to his crucifixion; and the better to prepare the minds of his apostles for his death and departure from them, he told them what he was to suffer, and yet that after all he should rise again. They, whose minds were yet big with expectations of a temporal power

* Mark iii. 16, 17.

† Matt. xvii. 5.

‡ John xii. 29.

* Heb. xii. 26.

† Luke ix. 54.

and monarchy, understood not well the meaning of his discourses to them. However, St. James and his brother, supposing the resurrection that he spoke of would be the time when his power and greatness would commence, prompted their mother, Salome, to put up a petition for them.* She, presuming probably on her relation to Christ, and knowing that our Saviour had promised his apostles, "that when he was come into his kingdom, they should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" and that he already honored her two sons with an intimate familiarity, after leave modestly asked for her address, begged of him, that when he took possession of his kingdom, her two sons, James and John, might have the principal places of honor and dignity next his own person; the one sitting on his "right hand," and the "other" on his "left," as the heads of Judah and Joseph had the first places among the rulers of the tribes in the Jewish nation. Our Lord directing his discourse to the two apostles, at whose suggestion he knew their mother had made this address, told them, they quite mistook the nature of his kingdom, which consisted not in external grandeur and sovereignty, but in an inward life and power, wherein the highest place would be to take the greatest pains, and to undergo the heaviest troubles and sufferings; that they should do well to consider, whether they were able to endure what he was to undergo, to drink of that bitter cup which he was to drink of, and to go through that baptism, wherein he was shortly to be baptized in his own blood. Our apostles were not yet cured of their ambitious humor; but either not understanding the force of our Saviour's reasonings, or too confidently presuming upon their own strength, answered, that they could do all this. But he, the goodness of whose nature ever made him put the best and most candid interpretation upon men's words and actions; yea, even those of his great enemies; did not take the advantage of their hasty and inconsiderate reply, to treat them with sharp and quick reproofs; but mildly owning their forwardness to suffer, told them, that as for sufferings, they should indeed suffer as well as he, (and so we accordingly find they did; St. James, after all, dying a violent death; St. John enduring great miseries and torments; and might we believe Chrysostom and Theophylact, martyrdom itself, though others nearer to those times assure us he died a natural death,) but for any peculiar honor or dignity, he would not by an absolute and peremptory favor of his own, dispose of it any otherwise than according to those rules and instructions which he had received of his Father. The rest of the apostles were offended with this ambitious request of "the sons of Zebedee;" but our Lord, to calm their passions, discoursed to them of the nature of the evangelical state, that it was not here, as in the kingdoms and "seigniories" of this world, where the great ones receive homage and fealty from those that are under them, but that in his service humility was the way to honor; that whoever took most pains, and did most good, would be the greatest person, pre-eminence being here to be measured by industry and diligence, and a ready

condescension to the meanest offices that might be subservient to the souls of men; and that this was no more than what he sufficiently taught them by his own example, being come into the world, not to be served himself with any pompous circumstances of state and splendor, but to serve others, and to lay down his life for the redemption of mankind. With which discourse the storm blew over, and their exorbitant passions began on all hands to be allayed and pacified.

7. What became of St. James after our Saviour's ascension we have no certain account, either from sacred or ecclesiastical stories. Sophronius tells us, that he preached to the dispersed Jews, which surely he means of that dispersion that was made of the Jewish converts after the death of Stephen. The Spanish writers generally contend, that having preached the gospel up and down Judæa and Samaria, after the death of Stephen he came to these western parts, and particularly into Spain, (some add Britain and Ireland) where he planted Christianity, and appointed some select disciples to perfect what he had begun, and then returned back to Jerusalem. Of this there are no footsteps in any ancient writers, earlier than the middle ages of the church, when it is mentioned by Isidore, the Breviary of Toledo, and Arabic book of Anastasius, patriarch of Antioch, concerning the Passions of the Martyrs, and some others after them. Nay, Baronius himself, though endeavoring to render the account as smooth and plausible as he could, and to remove what objections lay against it; yet after all confesses, he did it only to show, that the thing was not impossible, nor to be accounted such a monstrous and extravagant fable as some men made it to be, as indeed elsewhere he plainly and peremptorily both denies and disproves it. He could not but see, that the shortness of this apostle's life, the apostles continuing all in one entire body at Jerusalem, even after the dispersing of the other Christians, probably not going out of the bounds of Judæa for many years after our Lord's ascension, could not comport with so tedious and difficult a voyage, and the time which he must necessarily spend in those parts; and therefore it is safest to confine his ministry to Judæa, and the parts thereabouts, and to seek for him at Jerusalem, where we are sure to find him.

8. Herod Agrippa, son of Aristobulus, and grand-child of Herod the Great, (under whom Christ was born) had been in great favor with the late emperor Caligula, but much more with his successor Claudius, who confirmed his predecessor's grant, with the addition of Judæa, Samaria, and Abilene, the remaining portions of his grandfather's dominions. Claudius being settled in the empire, Herod comes over from Rome to take possession, and to manage the affairs of his newly acquired kingdom. A prince noble and generous, prudent and politic, thoroughly versed in all the arts of courtship, able to oblige enemies, and to mollify or decline the displeasure of the emperor, (witness his subtle and cunning insinuations to Caligula, when he commanded the Jews to account him a god) he was one that knew, let the wind blow which way it would, how to gain the point he aimed at; of a courteous and affable demeanor; but withal a mighty zealot for the Jewish

* Mat. xx. 20.

religion, and a most accurate observer of the Mosaic law, keeping himself free from all legal impurities, and suffering no day to pass over his head, in which he himself was not present at sacrifice. Being desirous in the entrance upon his sovereignty to insinuate himself into the favor of the populace, and led no less by his own zealous inclination, he saw no better way, than to fall heavy upon the Christians, a sort of men whom he knew the Jews infinitely hated, as a novel and an upstart sect, whose religion proclaimed open defiance to the Mosaic institutions. Hereupon he began to raise a persecution; but, alas, the commonalty were too mean a sacrifice to fall as the only victim to his zeal and popular designs—he must have a fatter and more honorable sacrifice. It was not long before St. James's stirring and active temper, his bold reproving of the Jews, and vigorous contending for the truth and excellency of the Christian religion, rendered him a fit object for his turn. Him he commands to be apprehended, cast into prison, and sentence of death to be passed upon him. As he was led forth to the place of martyrdom, the soldier or officer that had guarded him to the tribunal, or rather his accuser, (and so Suides expressly tells us it was,) having been convinced by that mighty courage and constancy which St. James showed at the time of his trial, repented of what he had done, came and fell down at the apostle's feet, and heartily begged pardon for what he said against him. The holy man, after a little surprise at the thing, raised him up, embraced and kissed him. "Peace," (said he,) "my son, peace be to thee, and the pardon of thy faults." Whereupon, before them all he publicly professed himself to be a Christian, and so both were beheaded at the same time. Thus fell St. James, the apostolic proto-martyr, the first of that number that gained the crown, cheerfully taking that cup of which he had long since told his Lord he was most ready to drink.

9. But the divine vengeance, that never sleeps, suffered not the death of this innocent and righteous man to pass long unrevenged; of which, though St. Luke gives us but a short account, yet Josephus,* who might himself remember it, being a youth at that time of seven or eight years of age, sets down the story with its particular circumstances, agreeing almost exactly with the sacred historian. Shortly after St. James's martyrdom, Herod removed to Cæsarea, being resolved to make war upon the neighboring Tyrians and Sidonians: while he was here, he proclaimed solemn sights and festival entertainments to be held in honor of Cæsar, to which there flocked a great confluence of all the nobility thereabouts. Early in the morning, on the second day, he came with great state into the theatre, to make an oration to the people, being clothed in a robe all over, curiously wrought with silver, which encountering with the beams of the rising sun, reflected such a lustre upon the eyes of the people (who make sensible appearances the only true measures of greatness) as begot an equal wonder and veneration in them, crying out (prompted no doubt by flatterers, who began the cry) that it was some deity which they beheld, and that he who spake to them must be

something above the ordinary standard of humanity. This impious applause Herod received without any token of dislike, or sense of that injury that was hereby done to the Supreme Being of the world. But a sudden accident changed the scene, and turned the comic part into a black fatal tragedy. Looking up, he espied an owl sitting upon a rope over his head, (as probably also he did an angel, for so St. Luke mentions it,) which he presently beheld as the fatal messenger of his death, as heretofore it had been of his prosperity and success. An incurable melancholy immediately seized upon his mind, as exquisite torments did upon his bowels, caused, without question, by those worms St. Luke speaks of, which immediately fed and preyed upon him. "Behold," said he, turning to those about him, "the deity you admired, and yourselves evidently convinced of flattery and falsehood; see me here, by the laws of fate condemned to die, whom just now ye styled immortal." Being removed into the palace, his pains still increased upon him; and though the people mourned and wept, fasted and prayed for his life and health, yet his acute torments got the upper hand, and after five days put a period to his life. But to return to St. James.

10. Being put to death, his body is said to have taken a second voyage into Spain, where we are with confidence enough told it rests at this day. Indeed I met with a very formal account of its translation thither, written (says the publisher) above six hundred years since, by a monk of the abbey of La Fleury, in France: the sum whereof is this: the apostles at Jerusalem designing Ctesiphon for Spain, ordained him bishop, and others being joined to his assistance, they took the body of St. James, and went on board a ship, without oars, without a pilot, or any to steer and conduct their voyage, trusting only to the merits of that apostle, whose remains they carried along with them. In seven days they arrived at a port in Spain, where landing, the corpse was suddenly taken from them, and, with great appearances of an extraordinary light from heaven, conveyed they knew not whither, to the place of its interment. The men, you may imagine, were exceedingly troubled, that so great a treasure should be ravished from them; but upon their prayers and tears, they were conducted by an angel to the place where the apostle was buried, twelve miles from the sea. Here they addressed themselves to a rich noble matron, called Luparia, who had a great estate in those parts, but was a severe idolatress, begging of her that they might have leave to entomb the bones of the holy apostle within her jurisdiction. She entertained them with contempt and scorn, with curses and execrations, bidding them go and ask leave of the king of the country. They did so, but were by him treated with all the instances of rage and fury, and pursued by him, till himself perished in the attempt. They returned back to their Gallician matron, whom, by many miracles, and especially by destroying a dragon that miserably infested those parts, they at last made convert to the faith. She thereupon commanded her images to be broken, the altars to be demolished, and her own idol-temple, being cleansed and purged, to be dedicated to the honor of St. James, by which means Christianity mightily pre

* Antiquit. Jud. lib. xix. c. 7, p. 679.

vailed, and triumphed over idolatry in all those countries. This is the sum of the account, call it romance or history, which I do not desire to impose any further upon the reader's faith than he shall find himself disposed to believe it. I add no more, than that his body was afterwards translated from Iria Flavia (the place of its first repose) to Compostella: though a learned person will have it to have been but one and the same place, and that after the story of St. James had gotten some footing in the belief of men, it began to be called ad Jacobum Apostolum, thence in after-times Giacomo Postolo, which was at last jumbled into Compostella; where it were to tire both the reader and myself, to tell him with what solemn veneration, and incredible miracles reported to be done here, this apostle's relics are worshipped at this day; whence Baronius call it the great storehouse of miracles lying open to the whole world, and wisely confesses it one of the best arguments to prove that his body was translated thither. And I should not scruple to be of his mind, could I be assured that such miracles were truly done there.

ST. JOHN.

St. JOHN was a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, younger brother to St. James, together with whom he was brought up in the trade of fishing. St. Jerome makes him remarkable upon the account of his nobility, whereby he became acquainted with the high-priest, and resolutely ventured himself amongst the Jews at our Saviour's trial, prevailed to introduce Peter into the hall, was the only apostle that attended our Lord at his crucifixion, and afterwards durst own his mother, and keep her at his own house. But the nobility of his family, and especially that it should be such as to procure him so much respect from persons of the highest rank and quality, seems not reconcilable with the meanness of his father's trade, and the privacy of his fortunes. And for his acquaintance with the high-priest, I should rather put it upon some other account, especially if it be true what Nicephorus relates, that he had lately sold his estate, left by his father in Galilee, to Annas the high-priest, and had therewith purchased a fair house at Jerusalem, about Mount Sion, whence he became acquainted with him. Before his coming to Christ, he seems for some time to have been disciple to John the Baptist, being probably that other disciple that was with Andrew, when they left the Baptist to follow our Saviour, so particularly does he relate all circumstances of that transaction, though modestly, as in other parts of his gospel, concealing his own name. He was at the same time with his brother called by our Lord both to the discipleship and apostolate; by far the youngest of all the apostles, as the ancients generally affirm, and his great age seems to evince, living near seventy years after our Saviour's suffering.

2. There is not much said concerning him in the sacred story, more than what is recorded of him in conjunction with his brother James, which we have already remarked in his life. He was

peculiarly dear to his Lord and master, being "the disciple whom Jesus loved; that is, treated with more freedom and familiarity than the rest. And indeed he was not only one of the three whom our Saviour made partakers of the private passages of his life, but had some instances of a more particular kindness and favor conferred upon him. Witness his lying in our Saviour's bosom at the paschal supper; it being the custom of those times to lie along at meals upon couches, so that the second lay with his head in the bosom of him that was before him; this honorable place was not given to any of the aged, but reserved for our apostle: nay, when Peter was desirous to know which of them our Saviour meant, when he told them that one of them should betray him, and durst not himself propound the question, he made use of St. John (whose familiarity with him might best warrant such an inquiry) to ask our Lord; who thereupon made them understand, it was Judas whom he designed by the traitor. This favor our apostle endeavored in some measure to answer by returns of particular kindness and constancy to our Saviour, staying with him when the rest deserted him. Indeed, upon our Lord's first apprehension he fled after the other apostles, it not being without some probabilities of reason, that the ancients conceive him to have been that "young man" that followed after Christ, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; whom when the officers laid hold upon, he left the linen cloth, and fled naked from them.* This in all likelihood was that garment that he had cast about him at supper, (for they had peculiar vestments for that purpose,) and being extremely affected with the treason, and our Lord's approaching passion, had forgot to put on his other garments, but followed him into the garden in the same habit wherewith he arose from the table; it being then night, and so less liable to be taken notice of either by himself or others. But though he fled at present, to avoid that sudden violence that was offered to him, yet he soon recovered himself, and returned back to seek his master, confidently entered into the high-priest's hall, and followed our Lord through the several passages of his trial, and at last waited upon him (and for any thing we know, was the only apostle that did so) at his execution, owning him, as well as being owned by him, in the midst of arms and guards, and in the thickest crowd of his most inveterate enemies. Here it was that our Lord, by his last will and testament made upon the cross, appointed him guardian of his own mother, the blessed virgin: "When he saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, woman, behold thy son:† see, here is one that shall supply my place, and be to thee instead of a son, to love and honor thee, to provide and take care for thee: "and to the disciple he said, behold thy mother;" she whom thou shall henceforth deal with, treat and observe with that duty and honorable regard, which the relation of an indulgent mother challenges from a pious and obedient son: whereupon "he took her into his own house," her husband, Joseph, being some time since dead, and made her a principal part of

* Mark xiv. 51.

† John xix. 26, 27.

his charge and care. And certainly the holy Jesus could not have given a more honorable testimony of his particular respect and kindness to St. John, than to commit his own mother, whom of all earthly relations he held most dear and valuable, to his trust and care, and to substitute him to supply that duty which he himself paid her while he was here below.

3. At the first news of our Lord's return from the dead, he, accompanied with Peter, presently hastened to the sepulchre. Indeed, there seems to have been a mutual intimacy between these two apostles more than the rest. It was to Peter that St. John gave the notice of Christ's appearing, when he came to them at the sea of Tiberias in the habit of a stranger; and it was for John that Peter was so solicitously inquisitive to know what should become of him. After Christ's ascension, we find these two going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, and miraculously healing the poor impotent cripple; both preaching to the people, and both apprehended together by the priests and Sadducees, and thrown into prison, and the next day brought forth to plead their cause before the Sanhedrim. These were the two chosen by the apostles to send down to Samaria, to settle and confirm the plantations which Philip had made in those parts, where they confounded and baffled Simon the magician, and set him in a hopeful way to repentance. To these St. Paul addressed himself, as those that seemed to be pillars among the rest, who accordingly "gave him the right-hand of fellowship;" and confirmed his mission to the Gentiles.

4. In the division of provinces which the apostles made among themselves, Asia fell to his share; though he did not presently enter upon his charge, otherwise we must needs have heard of him in the account which St. Luke gives of St. Paul's several journeys into and residence in those parts. Probable therefore it is, that he dwelt still in his own house at Jerusalem, at least till the death of the blessed virgin, (and this is plainly asserted by Nicephorus from the account of those historians that were before him,) whose death, says Eusebius, happened anno Christi 48, about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. Some time (probably years) after her death, he took his journey into Asia, and industriously applied himself to the propagating Christianity, preaching where the gospel had not yet been made known, and confirming it where it was already planted. Many churches of note and eminency were of his foundation, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and others; but his chief place of residence was at Ephesus, where St. Paul had many years before settled a church, and constituted Timothy bishop of it. Nor can we suppose that he confined his ministry merely in Asia Minor, but that he preached in other parts of the East; probably in Parthia, his first epistle being anciently intitled to them; and the Jesuits, in the relation of their success in those parts, assure us that the Bassoræ (a people of India) constantly affirm, from a tradition received from their ancestors, that St. John planted the Christian faith there.

5. Having spent many years in this employment, he was at length accused to Domitian, who

had begun a persecution against the Christians, as an eminent assertor of atheism and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire. By his command the proconsul of Asia sent him bound to Rome, where his treatment was what might be expected from so bloody and barbarous a prince; he was cast into a caldron of boiling oil, or rather oil set on fire. But that Divine Providence which secured the three Hebrew captives in the flames of a burning furnace, brought this holy man safe out of this, one would have thought, unavoidable destruction. An instance of so signal preservation as had been enough to persuade a considering man, that there must be a divinity in that religion that had such mighty and solemn attestations. But miracles themselves will not convince him that is fallen under a hard heart, and an injudicious mind. The cruel emperor was not satisfied with this, but presently orders him to be banished and transported into an island. This was accounted a kind of capital punishment, ἡ ἐπὶ τὴν νῆσον ἐξορία παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις κεφαλικὴν τιμωρίαν ἐμμείτο, says Pachymer, speaking of this very instance, where κεφαλικὴ τιμωρία is not to be understood as extending to life, but loss of privilege. Therefore this punishment in the Roman laws, is called *capitis diminutio*, (and it was the second sort of it,) because the person thus banished was disfranchised, and the city thereby lost a head. It succeeded in the room of that ancient punishment, *aqua et igni interdicere*, to interdict a person the use of fire and water, the two great and necessary conveniences of man's life, whereby was tacitly implied, that he must, for his own defence, betake himself into banishment; it being unlawful for any to accommodate him with lodging or diet, or any thing necessary to the support of life. This banishing into islands was properly called *deportatio*, and was the worst and severest kind of exile, whereby the criminal forfeited his estate, and being bound and put on ship-board, was by public officers transported into some certain island, (which none but the emperor himself might assign,) there to be confined to perpetual banishment. The place of our St. John's banishment was not Ephesus, as Chrysostom by a great mistake makes it, but Patmos, a disconsolate island in the Archipelago, where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ: here it was, about the latter end of Domitian's reign, (as Irenæus tells us,) that he wrote his Apocalypse, or book of Revelations; wherein, by frequent visions and prophetic representations, he had a clear scheme and prospect of the state and condition of Christianity in the future periods and ages of the church. Which certainly was not the least instance of that kindness and favor which our Lord particularly showed to this apostle; and it seemed very suitable at this time, that the goodness of God should overpower the malice of men, and that he should be entertained with the more immediate converse of heaven, who was now cut off from all ordinary conversation and society with men. In a monastery of Caliores, or Greek monks, in this island, they show a dead man's hand at this day, the nails of whose fingers grow again as often as they are pared; which the Turks will have to be one of their prophets, while the Greeks constantly affirm

it to have been the hand of St. John, wherewith he wrote the Revelations; and, probably, both true alike.

6. Domitian, whose prodigious wickedness had rendered him infamous and burthensome to the world, being taken out of the way, Cocceius Nerva succeeded in the empire, a prudent man, and of a milder and more sober temper. He rescinded the odious acts of his predecessors; and by public edict recalled those from banishment whom the fury of Domitian had sent thither. St. John taking the advantage of this general indulgence, left Patmos, and returned into Asia, his ancient charge; but chiefly fixed his seat at Ephesus, the care and presidency whereof (Timothy their bishop having been lately martyred by the people, for persuading them against their heathen feasts and sports, especially one called *Karayayion*, wherein was a mixture of debauchery and idolatry) he took upon him; and by the assistance of seven bishops, governed that large spacious diocese. Nicephorus adds, that he not only managed the affairs of the church, ordered and disposed the clergy, but erected churches, which surely must be meant of oratories, and little places for their solemn conventions, building churches in the modern notion, not being consistent with the poverty and persecution of Christians in those early times. Here, at the request of the bishops of Asia, he wrote his gospel, (they are authors of no credit and value that make it written during his confinement in the isle of Patmos,) with very solemn preparation, whereof more when we come to consider the writings which he left behind him.

7. He lived till the time of Trajan, about the beginning of whose reign he departed this life, very aged, about the ninety-eighth or ninety-ninth year of his life, as is generally thought. Chrysostom is very positive, that he was a hundred years old when he wrote his gospel, and that he lived full twenty years after; the same is affirmed by Dorotheus, that he lived one hundred and twenty years; which to me seems altogether improbable, seeing by this account he must be fifty years of age when called to be an apostle, a thing directly contrary to the whole consent and testimony of antiquity, which makes him very young at the time of his calling to the apostolic office. He died (says the Arabian) "in the expectation of his blessedness," by which he means his quiet and peaceable departure, in opposition to a violent and bloody death. Indeed Theophylact, and others before him, conceive him to have died a martyr, upon no other ground than what our Saviour told him and his brother, that they should drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized, which Chrysostom strictly understands of martyrdom and a bloody death. It was, indeed, literally verified of his brother James; and for him, though, as St. Jerome observes, he was not put to death, yet may he be truly styled a martyr; his being put into a vessel of boiling oil, his many years' banishment, and other sufferings in the cause of Christ, justly challenging that honorable title, though he did not actually lay down his life for the testimony of the gospel, it being not want of good-will either in him or his enemies, but the Divine Providence immediately overruling the powers of nature,

that kept the malice of his enemies from its full execution.

8. Others, on the contrary, are so far from admitting him to die a martyr, that they question, nay, peremptorily deny that he ever died at all. The first assertor, and that but obliquely, that I find of this opinion, was Hippolytus, bishop of Porto, and scholar to Clemens of Alexandria, who ranks him in the same capacity with Enoch and Elias; for speaking of the twofold coming of Christ, he tells us, that his first coming in the flesh had John the Baptist for its forerunner, and his second to judgment shall have Enoch, Elias and St. John. Ephrem, patriarch of Antioch, is more express; he tells us, there are three persons answerable to the three dispensations of the world yet in the body, Enoch, Elias, and St. John; Enoch before the law, Elias under the law, and St. John under the gospel; concerning which last, that he never died, he confirms both from Scripture and tradition, and quotes St. Cyril (I suppose he means him of Alexandria) as of the same opinion. The whole foundation upon which this error is built, was that discourse that passed between our Lord and Peter concerning this apostle: for Christ having told Peter what was to be his own fate, Peter inquires what should become of St. John, knowing him to be "the disciple whom Jesus loved."* Our Lord rebukes his curiosity, by asking him, what that concerned him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" This the apostles misunderstood, and a report presently went out amongst them, "that that disciple should not die;" though St. John, who himself records the passage, inserts a caution, "that Jesus did not say, he should not die; but only, What if I will that he tarry till I come?" Which doubtless our Lord meant of his coming (so often mentioned in the New Testament) in judgment upon the Jews, at the final overthrow of Jerusalem, which St. John out-lived many years; and which our Lord particularly intended, when elsewhere he told them, "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."†

9. From the same original sprang the report, that he only lay sleeping in his grave. The story was current in St. Austine's days, from whom we receive this account, though possibly the reader will smile at the conceit. He tells us, it was commonly reported and believed that St. John was not dead; but that he rested like a man asleep in his grave at Ephesus, as plainly appeared from the dust sensibly boiling and bubbling up, which they accounted to be nothing else but the continual motion of his breath. This report St. Austine seems inclinable to believe, having received it, as he tells us, from very credible hands. He further adds, out of some apocryphal writings, what was generally known and reported, that when St. John, then in health, had caused his grave to be dug and prepared, he laid himself down in it as in a bed, and as they thought, only fell asleep. Nicephorus relates the story more at large, from whom (if it may be any pleasure to entertain the reader with these things) we shall

* John xxi. 21, 22, 23.

† Mat. xvi. 28.

give this account. St. John, foreseeing his translation into heaven, took the presbyters and ministers of the church of Ephesus, and several of the faithful, along with him out of the city, carried them unto a cemetery near at hand, whither he himself was wont to retire, and very earnestly recommended the state of the churches to God in prayer. Which being done, he commanded a grave to be immediately dug; and having instructed them in the more recondite mysteries of the theology, the most excellent precepts of a good life, concerning faith, hope, and especially charity, confirmed them in the practice of religion, and commended them to the care and blessing of our Saviour, he solemnly took his leave of them, signed himself with the sign of the cross, and before them all went down into the grave; strictly charging them to put on the grave-stone, and to make it fast, and the next day to come and open it, and take a view of it. They did so; and having opened the sepulchre, found nothing there but the grave-clothes which he had left behind him. To all which let me add, while my hand is in these things, what Ephrem relates, that from this grave, wherein he rested so short a time, a kind of sacred oil or unguent was wont to be gathered. Gregory of Tours, says it was manna, which even in his time, like flour, was cast up from the sepulchre, and was carried up and down the world for the curing of diseases. This report of our apostle's being yet alive, some men made use of to wild and fantastic purposes. Beza tells us of an impostor in his time, (whom Postellus, who vainly boasted that he had the soul of Adam, was wont to call his brother,) who publicly professed himself to be our St. John, and was afterwards burnt at Tholose in France. Nor was this any more than what was done in the more early ages of Christianity. For Sulpitius Severus giving us an account of a young Spaniard that first professed himself to be Elias, and then Christ himself, adds, that there was one at the same time in the east, who gave out himself to be St. John. So fast will error, like circles in the water, multiply itself; and one mistaken place of Scripture gives countenance to a hundred stories, that shall be built upon it. I have no more to add, but what we meet with in the Arabic writer of his life, (though it little agrees with the preceding passages,) who reports, that there were none present at his burial but his disciple Phogsir, (probably Phrogor, or Prochorus, one of the seven deacons, and generally said to have been St. John's companion and assistant,) whom he strictly charged never to discover his sepulchre to any; it may be for the same reason for which it is thought God concealed the body of Moses, to prevent the idolatrous worshipping of his relics: and accordingly the Turks, who conceit that he is buried in the confines of Lydia, pay great honor and veneration to his tomb.

10. St. John seems always to have led a single life, and so the ancients tell us; nay, St. Ambrose positively affirms, that all the apostles were married, except St. John and St. Paul. There want not indeed some, and especially the middle writers of the church, who will have our apostle to have been married, and that it was his marriage which our Lord was at in Cana of Galilee invited

thither upon the account of his consanguinity and alliance; but that being convinced, by the miracle of the water turned into wine, he immediately quitted his conjugal relation, and became one of our Lord's disciples. But this, as Baronius himself confesses, is trifling, and the issue of fabulous invention, a thing wholly unknown to the fathers and best writers of the church, and which not only has no just authority to support it, but arguments enough to beat it down. As for his natural temper, he seems (as we have observed in his brother's life) to have been of a more eager and resolute disposition, easily apt to be inflamed and provoked, which his reduced age brought to a more staid and a calmer temper. He was polished by no study or arts of learning; but what was wanting in that was abundantly made up in the excellent temper and constitution of his mind, and that furniture of divine graces, which he was adorned withal. His humility was admirable, studiously concealing his own worth and honor; in all his epistles (as Eusebius long since observed) he never puts down the honorable titles of apostle or evangelist, but only styles himself, and that too but sometimes, presbyter, or elder, alluding probably to his age, as much as office; in his gospel, when he speaks of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," he constantly conceals his own name, leaving the reader to conjecture who was meant. Love and charity he practised himself and affectionately pressed upon others; our Lord's great love to him seems to have inspired his soul with a bigger and more generous charity than the rest: it is the great vein that runs through his writings, and especially his epistles, where he urges it as the great and peculiar law of Christianity, and without which all other pretences to Christian religion are vain and frivolous, useless and insignificant. And this was his constant practice to his dying day. When age and weakness grew upon him at Ephesus, that he was no longer able to preach to them, he used, at every public meeting, to be led to the church, and say no more to them than, "Little children, love one another." And when his auditors, wearied by the constant repetition of the same thing, asked him why he always spoke the same, he answered, because it was the command of our Lord, and that if they did nothing else, this alone was enough.

11. But the largest measures of his charity he expressed in the mighty care that he showed to the souls of men, unweariedly spending himself in the service of the gospel; travelling from east to west to leaven the world with the principles of that holy religion which he was sent to propagate, patiently enduring all torments, breaking through all difficulties and discouragements, shunning no dangers, that he might do good to souls, redeem men's minds from error and idolatry, and reduce them from the snares of a debauched and vicious life. Witness one famous instance. In his visitation of the churches near to Ephesus, he made choice of a young man, whom with a special charge for his instruction and education, he committed to the bishop of that place. The spiritual man undertook the charge, instructed his pupil, and baptized him: and then thinking he might a little remit the reins of discipline, the youth made an ill use of his liberty, and was quickly debauched

by bad companions, making himself captain to a company of highwaymen, the most loose, cruel, and profligate wretches of the country. St. John, at his return, understanding this, and sharply reproving the negligence and unfaithfulness of his tutor, resolved to find him out; and without any consideration of what danger he entered upon, in venturing himself upon persons of desperate fortunes and forfeited consciences, he went to the mountains where their usual haunt was; and being here taken by the sentinel, he desired to be brought before their commander, who no sooner espied him coming towards him but he immediately fled. The aged apostle followed after, but not able to overtake him, passionately entreated him to stay, promising him to undertake with God for his peace and pardon. He did so, and both melted into tears; and the apostle having prayed with and for him, returned him, a true penitent and convert, to the church. This story we have elsewhere related more at large out of Eusebius, as he does from Clemens Alexandrinus, since which that tract itself of Clemens is made public to the world.

12. Nor was it the least instance of his care of the church, and charity to the souls of men, that he was so infinitely vigilant against heretics and seducers, countermining their artifices, antidoting against the poison of their errors, and shunning all communion and conversation with their persons. Going along with some of his friends at Ephesus to the bath, (whither he used frequently to resort, and the ruins whereof, of porphyry, not far from the place where stood the famous temple of Diana, as a late eye-witness informs us, are still showed at this day,) he inquired of the servant that waited there, who was within; the servant told him, Cerinthus; (Epiphanius says it was Ebion, and it is not improbable that they might be both there;) which the apostle no sooner understood, but in great abhorrency he turned back: "Let us be gone, my brethren, (said he,) and make haste from this place; lest the bath wherein there is such a heretic as Cerinthus, the great enemy of the truth, fall upon our heads." This account Irenæus delivers from Polycarp, St. John's own scholar and disciple. This Cerinthus was a man of loose and pernicious principles, endeavoring to corrupt Christianity with many damnable errors. To make himself more considerable, he struck in with the Jewish converts, and made a bustle in that great controversy at Jerusalem about circumcision and the observation of the law of Moses.—But his usual haunt was Asia; where, amongst other things, he openly denied Christ's resurrection, affirmed the world to have been made by angels, broaching unheard of dogmata, and pretending them to have been communicated to him by angels; venting revelations composed by himself, as a great apostle, affirming that after the resurrection the reign of Christ would commence here upon earth, and that men, living again at Jerusalem, should, for the space of a thousand years, enjoy all manner of sensual pleasures and delights: hoping by this fools' paradise that he should tempt men of loose and brutish minds over to his party. Much of the same stamp was Ebion, (though in some principles differing from him, as error agrees with itself as little as with truth,)

who held that the holy Jesus was a mere and a mean man, begotten by Joseph of Mary his wife, and that the observance of the Mosaic rites and laws was necessary to salvation: and because they saw St. Paul stand so full in their way, they reproached him as an apostate from his religion, and rejected his epistles, owning none but St. Matthew's gospel in Hebrew, having little or no value for the rest; the sabbath and Jewish rites they observed with the Jews; and on the Lord's day celebrated the memory of our Lord's resurrection, according to the custom and practice of the Christians.

13. Besides these, there was another sort of heretics that infested the church in St. John's time, the Nicolaitans, mentioned by him in his Revelation, and "whose doctrine" our Lord is with a particular emphasis there said "to hate;"* indeed a most wretched and brutish sect, generally supposed to derive their original from Nicolas, one of the seven deacons whom we read of in the Acts, whereof Clemens of Alexandria gives this probable account. This Nicolas having a beautiful wife, and being reproved by the apostles for being jealous of her, to show how far he was from it, brought her forth, and gave any that would, leave to marry her, affirming this to be suitable to that saying, *οτι παραχρησθαι τη σαρκι ουκ*, "that we ought to abuse the flesh." This speech, he tells us, was ascribed to St. Matthias, who taught, "that we must fight with the flesh and abuse it," and not allowing it any thing for pleasure, increase the soul by faith and knowledge. These words and actions of his, his disciples and followers misunderstanding, and perverting things to the worst sense imaginable, began to let loose the reins, and henceforward to give themselves over to the greatest filthiness, the most shameless and impudent uncleanness, throwing down all enclosures, making the most promiscuous mixtures lawful, and pleasure the ultimate end and happiness of man. Such were their principles, such their practices; whereas Nicolas, their pretended patron and founder, was, says Clemens, a sober and a temperate man, never making use of any but his own wife, by whom he had one son, and several daughters, who all lived in perpetual virginity.

14. The last instance that we shall remark of our apostle's care for the good of the church, is the writings which he left to posterity; whereof the first in time, though placed last, is his Apocalypse, or book of Revelations, written while confined in Patmos. It was of old not only rejected by heretics, but controverted by many of the fathers themselves. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, has a very large discourse, concerning it; he tells us, that many plainly disowned this book, not only for the matter, but the author of it, as being neither apostle, nor any holy or ecclesiastical person; that Cerinthus prefixed St. John's name to it, to give the more plausible title to his dream of Christ's reign upon earth, and that sensual and carnal state that should attend it; that for his part he durst not reject it, looking upon it as containing wise and admirable mysteries, though he could not fathom and comprehend them; that he did not measure them by his own line, nor condemn, but

rather admire what he could not understand ; that he owned the author to have been a holy and divinely inspired person, but could not believe it to be St. John the apostle and evangelist, neither style, matter, nor method agreeing with his other writings ; that in this he frequently names himself, which he never does in any other ; that there were several Johns at that time, and two buried at Ephesus, the apostle, and another, one of the disciples that dwelt in Asia, but which was the author of this book, he leaves uncertain. But though doubted of by some, it was entertained by the far greater part of the ancients as the genuine work of our St. John. Nor could the setting down his name be any reasonable exception ; for whatever he might do in his other writings, especially his gospel, where it was less necessary, historical matters depending not so much upon his authority, yet it was otherwise in prophetic revelations, where the person of the revealer adds great weight and moment ; the reason why some of the prophets under the Old Testament did so frequently set down their own names. The diversity of the style is of no considerable value in this case, it being no wonder, if in arguments so vastly different, the same person did not always observe the same tenor and way of writing ; whereof there want not instances in some others of the apostolic order. The truth is, all circumstances concur to entitle our apostle to be the author of it, his name frequently expressed, its being written in the island of Patmos, (a circumstance not pertaining to any but St. John,) his styling himself "their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," his writing particular epistles to the "seven churches of Asia," all pointed or at least cultivated by him ; the doctrine in it suitable to the apostolic spirit and temper, evidently bearing witness in this case. That which seems to have given ground to doubt concerning both its author and authority, was its being a long time before it was universally joined with other books of the holy canon ; for containing in it some passages directly levelled at Rome, the seat of the Roman empire, and others which might be thought to symbolize with some Jewish dreams and figments, it might possibly seem fit to the prudence of those times for a while to suppress it. Nor is the conjecture of a learned man to be despised, who thinks that it might be intrusted in the keeping of John the presbyter, scholar to our apostle ; whence probably the report might arise, that he, who was only the keeper, was the author of it. I add no more, than that upon the account of this Apocalypse, containing a prophetic scheme of the future state of the Christian church, he is in a strict sense a prophet, and has thereby one considerable addition to his titles, being not only an apostle and evangelist, but a prophet, an honor peculiar to himself. Peter was an apostle, but properly no evangelist : Mark an evangelist, but no apostle : St. Matthew an apostle and evangelist, but no prophet : but St. John was both an apostle, an evangelist, and a prophet.

15. His gospel succeeds, written (says some) in Patmos, and published at Ephesus ; but as Irenæus and others more truly, written by him after his return to Ephesus ; composed at the earnest entreaty and solicitation of the Asian bishops and

ambassadors from several churches ; in order whereunto he first caused them to proclaim a general fast, to seek the blessing of heaven on so great and solemn an undertaking, which being done, he set about it. And if we may believe the report of Gregory, bishop of Tours, he tells us, that upon a hill, near Ephesus, there was a pro-seucha, or uncovered oratory, whither our apostle used often to retire for prayer and contemplation, and where he obtained of God, that it might not rain in that place till he had finished his gospel. Nay, he adds, that even in his time, no shower or storm ever came upon it. Two causes especially contributed to the writing of it ; the one, that he might obviate the early heresies of those times, especially of Ebion, Cerinthus, and the rest of that crew, who began openly to deny Christ's divinity, and that he had any existence before his incarnation ; the reason why our evangelist is so express and copious in that subject. The other was, that he might supply those passages of the evangelical history which the rest of the sacred writers had omitted. Collecting, therefore, the other three evangelists, he first set to his seal, ratifying the truth of them with his approbation and consent ; and then added his own gospel to the rest, principally insisting upon the acts of Christ from the first commencing of his ministry to the death of John the Baptist, wherein the others are most defective, giving scarce any account of the first year of our Saviour's ministry, which therefore he made up in very large and particular narrations. He largely records (as Nazianzen observes) our Saviour's discourses : but takes little notice of his miracles, probably because so fully and particularly related by the rest. The subject of his writing is very sublime and mysterious, mainly designing to prove Christ's divinity, eternal pre-existence, creating of the world, &c. Upon which account Theodoret styles his gospel *θεολογικὸν ἀπὸν ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἀνυπερβάτον*, a theology which human understandings can never fully penetrate and find out. Thence, generally by the ancients, he is resembled to an eagle, soaring aloft within the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was unable to follow him ; hence, peculiarly honored with the title of the Divine, as if due to none but him, at least to him in a more eminent and extraordinary manner. Nay, the very Gentile philosophers themselves could not but admire his writings : witness Amelius, the famous Platonist and regent of Porphyry's school at Alexandria ; who, quoting a passage out of the beginning of St. John's gospel, swore by Jupiter, that this barbarian (so the proud Greeks counted and called all that differed from them,) "had hit upon the right notion, when he affirmed, that the Word that made all things was in the beginning, and in place of prime dignity and authority with God ; and was that God that created all things, in whom every thing that was made had, according to its nature, its life and being ; that he was incarnate, and clothed with a body wherein he manifested the glory and magnificence of his nature ; that after his death he returned to the re-possession of divinity, and became the same God which he was before his assuming a body, and taking the human nature and flesh upon him." I have no more to observe, but that his gospel was afterwards translated into Hebrew,

and kept by the Jews *εν αποκρυφοις*, among their secret archives and records in their treasury at Tiberias; where a copy of it was found by one Joseph a Jew, afterwards converted, and whom Constantine the Great advanced to the honor of a count of the empire, who breaking open the treasury, though he missed of money, found books beyond all treasure, St. Matthew and St. John's gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in Hebrew; the reading whereof greatly contributed towards his conversion.

16. Besides these, our apostle wrote three epistles: the first whereof is catholic, calculated for all times and places, containing most excellent rules for the conduct of the Christian life, pressing to holiness and purity of manners, and not to rest in a naked and empty profession of religion; not to be led away with the crafty insinuations of seducers; antidoting men against the poison of the Gnostic principles and practices, to whom it is not to be doubted but that the apostle had a more particular respect in this epistle. According to his wonted modesty he conceals his name, it being of more concernment with wise men, what it is that is said, than who it is that says it. And this epistle Eusebius tells us was universally received, and never questioned by any; anciently, as appears by St. Augustine, inscribed to the Parthians, though for what reason I am to learn, unless (as we hinted before) it was, because he himself had heretofore preached in those parts of the world. The other two epistles are but short, and directed to particular persons; the one a lady of honorable quality, the other the charitable and hospitable Gaius, so kind a friend, so courteous an entertainer of all indigent Christians. These epistles, indeed, were not of old admitted into the canon, nor are owned by the church in Syria at this day; ascribed by many to the younger John, disciple to our apostle. But there is no just cause to question who was their father, seeing both the doctrine, phrase, and design of them do sufficiently challenge our apostle for their author. These are all the books wherein it pleased the Holy Spirit to make use of St. John for its penman and secretary; in the composure whereof, though his style and character be not florid and elegant, yet is it grave and simple, short and perspicuous. Dionysius of Alexandria tells us, that in his gospel and first epistle his phrase is more neat and elegant, there being an accuracy in the texture both of words and matter, that runs through all the reasonings of his discourses; but that in the Apocalypse, the style is nothing so pure and clear, being frequently mixed with more barbarous and improper phrases. Indeed his Greek generally abounds with Syriasms; his discourses many times abrupt, set off with frequent antitheses, connected with copulatives, passages often repeated, things at first more obscurely propounded, and which he is forced to enlighten with subsequent explications, words peculiar to himself, and phrases used in an uncommon sense. All which concur to render his way of writing less grateful, possibly, to the masters of eloquence, and an elaborate curiosity. St. Jerome observes, that in citing places out of the Old Testament, he more immediately translates from the Hebrew original, studying to render things word for word:

for being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, admirably skilled in the language of his country, it probably made him less exact in his Greek composures, wherein he had very little advantage, besides what was immediately communicated from above. But whatever was wanting in the politeness of his style, was abundantly made up in the zeal of his temper, and the excellency and sublimity of his matter; he truly answered his name, Boanerges, for he spake and wrote like a "son of thunder." Whence it is that his writings, but especially his gospel, have such great and honorable things spoken of them by the ancients. "The evangelical writings" (says St. Basil) "transcend the other parts of the holy volumes; in other parts God speaks to us by servants, the prophets; but in the gospels our Lord himself speaks to us, but among all the evangelical preachers, none like St. John, the son of thunder, for the sublimeness of his speech and the height of his discourses, beyond any man's capacity duly to reach and comprehend." "St. John, as a true son of thunder," (says Epiphanius,) "by a certain greatness of speech peculiar to himself, does, as it were, out of the clouds and the dark recesses of wisdom acquaint us with divine doctrines concerning the Son of God." To which let me add what St. Cyril of Alexandria, among other things, says concerning him, "that whoever looks to the sublimity of his incomprehensible notions, the acumen and sharpness of his reason, and the quick inferences of his discourses constantly succeeding and following upon one another, must needs confess that his gospel perfectly exceeds all admiration."*

ST. PHILIP.

Of all parts of Palestine, Galilee seems to have passed under the greatest character of ignominy and reproach. The country itself, because bordering upon the idolatrous uncircumcised nations, called Galilee of the Gentiles, the people generally beheld as more rude and boisterous, more unpolished and barbarous than the rest, not remarkable either for civility or religion. "The Galileans received him, having seen all the things

* The life and character of St. John can never be contemplated without deep interest by the thoughtful, meditative Christian. No result of historical inquiry can be more valuable than the development and representation of such a character to the spiritual understanding. Placed, in common with his associates, under circumstances the most remarkable, tried like them by temptations and sufferings the most affecting, he bore like them in meekness and patience the yoke and the burden which his Divine Master had allotted for his portion. But he is distinguished from among the rest by the sublime demonstrations of spiritual power acting on the mind. It was to him the Lord committed the charge of revealing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, where it stretches out and reaches unto the throne of the Father: and surely nothing can be more calculated to delight the mind of a thinking man, than the examination of the circumstances under which one so highly favored, and so wonderfully acted upon and occupied, passed through the world.—Ed.

that he did at Jerusalem at the feast, for they also went up unto the feast;”* as if it had been a wonder and a matter of very strange remark, to see so much devotion in them, as to attend the solemnity of the passover. Indeed both Jew and Gentile conspired in this, that they thought they could not fix a greater title of reproach upon our Saviour and his followers, than that of Galilean. “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”† a city in this province, said Nathanael, concerning Christ. “Search and look, (say the Pharisees,) for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet;”‡ as if nothing but briars and thorns could grow in that soil. But there needs no more to confute this ill-natured opinion, than that our Lord not only made choice of it as the seat of his ordinary residence and retreat, but that hence he chose those excellent persons, whom he made his apostles, the great instruments to convert the world. Some of these we have already given an account of, and more are yet behind.

2. Of this number was St. Philip, born at Bethsaida, a town near the sea of Tiberias, the city of Andrew and Peter. Of his parents and way of life the history of the gospel takes no notice; though probably he was a fisherman, the trade generally of that place. He had the honor of being first called to the discipleship, which thus came to pass. Our Lord, soon after his return from the wilderness, having met with Andrew and his brother Peter, after some short discourse parted from them:§ and the very next day, as he was passing through Galilee, he found Philip, whom he presently commanded to follow him; the constant form which he used in making choice of his disciples, and those that did inseparably attend upon him. So that the prerogative of being first called, evidently belongs to Philip, he being the first-fruits of our Lord’s disciples. For though Andrew and Peter were the first that came to, and conversed with Christ, yet did they immediately return to their trade again, and were not called to the discipleship till above a whole year after, when John was cast into prison. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, that it was Philip, to whom our Lord said, (when he would have excused himself at present, that he must go bury his father,) “Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me.” But besides that he gives no account whence he derived this intelligence, it is plainly inconsistent with the time of our apostle’s call, who was called to be a disciple a long time before that speech and passage of our Saviour. It may seem justly strange that Philip should at first sight so readily comply with our Lord’s command, and turn himself over into his service, having not yet seen any miracle that might evince his Messiahship, and divine commission, nor probably so much as heard any tidings of his appearance; and especially being a Galilean, and so of a more rustic and unyielding temper. But it cannot be doubted but that he was admirably versed in the writings of Moses and the prophets. Metaphrastes assures us (though how he came to know it otherwise than by conjecture I cannot imagine) that from his childhood he had excellent education, that

he frequently read over Moses’s books, and considered the prophecies that related to our Saviour; and was, no question, awakened with the general expectations that were then on foot among the Jews, (the date of the prophetic Scriptures concerning the time of Christ’s coming being now run out,) that the Messiah would immediately appear. Add to this, that the divine grace did more immediately accompany the command of Christ, to incline and dispose him to believe that this person was that very Messiah that was to come.

3. No sooner had religion taken possession of his mind, but like an active principle it began to ferment and diffuse itself. Away he goes, and finds Nathanael, a person of note and eminency, acquaints him with the tidings of the new-found Messiah, and conducts him to him. So forward is a good man to draw and direct others in the same way to happiness with himself. After his call to the apostleship much is not recorded of him in the holy story. It was to him that our Saviour propounded the question, what they should do for so much bread in the wilderness as would feed so vast a multitude;* to which he answered, that so much was not easily to be had; not considering, that to feed two or twenty thousand are equally easy to Almighty power, when pleased to exert itself. It was to him that the Gentile proselytes that came up to the passover addressed themselves, when desirous to see our Saviour, a person of whom they had heard so loud a fame.† It was with him that our Lord had that discourse concerning himself a little before the last paschal supper. The holy and compassionate Jesus had been fortifying their minds with fit considerations against his departure from them; had told them, that he was going to prepare room for them in the mansion of the blessed; that he himself was “the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man could come to the Father but by him,”‡ and that knowing him “they both knew and had seen the Father.” Philip, not duly understanding the force of our Saviour’s reasonings, begged of him that he would “show them the Father, and then this would abundantly convince and satisfy them. We can hardly suppose he should have such gross conceptions of the deity, as to imagine the Father vested with a corporeal and visible nature; but Christ having told them that they had seen him, and he knowing that God of old was wont frequently to appear in a visible shape, he only desired that he would manifest himself to them by some such appearance. Our Lord gently reprov’d his ignorance, that after so long attendance upon his instructions, he should not know that he was the image of his Father, the express characters of his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness appearing in him; that he said and did nothing but by his Father’s appointment, which it they did not believe, his miracles were a sufficient evidence; that therefore such demands were unnecessary and impertinent; and that it argued great weakness, after more than three years’ education under his discipline and institution, to be so unskilful in those matters. God expects improvement according to men’s opportunities; to be old and ignorant in the school of Christ, de-

* John iv. 45. † John i. 46. ‡ John vii. 52.
§ John i. 44.

* John vi. 5. † John xii. 22. ‡ John xiv. 8.

serves both reproach and punishment ; it is the character of very bad persons, that "they are ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth."^{*}

4. In the distribution of the several regions of the world made by the apostles, though no mention be made by Origen or Eusebius what part fell to our apostle, yet we are told by others, that the Upper Asia was his province, (the reason doubtless why he is said, by many, to have preached and planted Christianity in Scythia,) where he applied himself, with an indefatigable diligence and industry, to recover men out of the snare of the devil, to the embracing and acknowledging of the truth. By the constancy of his preaching and the efficacy of his miracles, he gained numerous converts, whom he baptized into the Christian faith, at once curing both souls and bodies ; their souls of error and idolatry, their bodies of infirmities and distempers ; healing diseases, dispossessing demons, settling churches, and appointing them guides and ministers of religion.

Having for many years successfully managed his apostolical office in all those parts, he came, in the last periods of his life, to Hierapolis in Phrygia, a city rich and populous, but answering its name in its idolatrous devotions. Amongst the many vain and trifling deities to whom they paid religious adoration, was a serpent, or dragon, (in memory no doubt of that infamous act of Jupiter, who in the shape of a dragon insinuated himself into the embraces of Proserpina, his own daughter, begot of Ceres, and whom these Phrygians chiefly worshipped, as Clemens Alexandrinus tells us ; so little reason had Baronius to say that they worshipped no such God,) of a more prodigious bigness than the rest, which they worshipped with great and solemn veneration. St. Philip was troubled to see the people so wretchedly enslaved to error, and therefore continually solicited heaven, till by prayer and calling upon the name of Christ, he had procured the death, or at least vanishing of this famed and beloved serpent : which done, he told them how unbecoming it was to give divine honors to such odious creatures ; that God alone was to be worshipped, as the great parent of the world, who had made man at first after his own glorious image ; and when fallen from that innocent and happy state, had sent his own Son into the world to redeem him, who died and rose from the dead, and shall come again at the last day, to raise men out of their graves, and to sentence and reward them according to their works. The success was, that the people were ashamed of their fond idolatry, and many broke loose from their chains of darkness, and ran over to Christianity. Whereupon the great enemy of mankind betook himself to his old methods, cruelty and persecution. The magistrates of the city seize the apostle, and having put him into prison, caused him to be severely whipped and scourged. This preparatory cruelty passed, he was led to execution, and being bound, was hanged up by the neck against a pillar ; though others tell us that he was crucified. We are further told, that at his execution the earth began suddenly to quake, and the ground whereon the people stood, to sink

under them ; which, when they apprehended and bewailed as an evident act of divine vengeance pursuing them for their sins, it as suddenly stopped, and went no further. The apostle being dead, his body was taken down by St. Bartholomew, his fellow-sufferer, though not finally executed, and Mariamne, St. Philip's sister, who is said to have been the constant companion of his travels, and decently buried ; after which having confirmed the people in the faith of Christ, they departed from them.

6. That St. Philip was married is generally affirmed by the ancients ; Clemens of Alexandria reckons him one of the married apostles, and that he had daughters whom he disposed in marriage : Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, tells us, that Philip, one of the twelve apostles, died at Hierapolis, with two of his daughters who persevered in their virginity, and that he had a third which died at Ephesus. The truth is, the not careful distinguishing between Philip the deacon (who lived at Cæsarea, and of whose four virgin daughters we read in the history of the apostles' acts) and our apostle, has bred some confusion among the ancients in this matter ; nay, has made some conclude them to have been but one and the same person. But with how little reason, will appear to any one that shall consider, that Philip, who was chosen to be one of the seven deacons, could not be one of the apostolical college, the apostles declaring upon that occasion, that they had affairs of a higher nature to attend upon : "then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables ; wherefore look ye out among you seven men of honest report, &c., and they chose Stephen and Philip, &c. (among you) the body of the people, not from among the apostles. So when, upon the persecution that arose upon Stephen's death, the church was dispersed, "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, (and Philip, the deacon, among the rest, who went down to the city of Samaria,) except the apostles," who tarried behind at Jerusalem. And when Philip had converted and baptized considerable numbers in that place, he was forced to send for two of the apostles from Jerusalem, that so by apostolic hands they might be confirmed, and might "receive the Holy Ghost." Which had been wholly needless had Philip himself been of the twelve apostles. But it is needless to argue in this matter, the accounts concerning them being so widely different ; for as they differed in their persons and offices, the one a deacon, the other an apostle, so also in the number of their children, four daughters being ascribed to the one, while three only are attributed to the other. He was one of the apostles who left no sacred writings behind him ; the greater part of the apostles (as Eusebius observes) having little leisure to write books, being employed in ministries more immediately useful and subservient to the happiness of mankind : though Epiphanius tells us, that the Gnostics were wont to produce a gospel forged under St. Philip's name, which they abused to the patronage of their horrible principles, and more brutish practices.*

* 2 Tim. iii. 7.

* This memoir of St. Philip very remarkably

ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

THAT St. Bartholomew was one of the twelve apostles the evangelical history is most express and clear, though it seems to take no further notice of him than the bare mention of his name. Which doubtless gave the first occasion to many, both anciently and of later time, not without reason to suppose, that he lies concealed under some other name, and that this can be no other than Nathanael, one of the first disciples that came to Christ. Accordingly we may observe, that as St. John never mentions Bartholomew in the number of the apostles, so the other evangelists never take notice of Nathanael, probably because the same person under two several names; and as in John, Philip and Nathanael are joined together in their coming to Christ, so in the rest of the evangelists, Philip and Bartholomew are constantly put together, without the least variation; for no other reason, I conceive, than because they were jointly called to the discipleship, so they are jointly referred in the apostolic catalogue; as afterwards we find them joint-companions in the writings of the church. But that which renders the thing most specious and probable is, that we find Nathanael particularly reckoned up with the other apostles to whom our Lord appeared at the sea of Tiberias after his resurrection; where there were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the two sons of Zebedee,* and two other of his disciples, who probably were Andrew and Philip. That by disciples is here meant apostles is evident, partly from the names of those that are reckoned up, partly because it is said, that "this was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples,"† it being plain that the two foregoing appearances were made to none but the apostles.

2. Had he been more than an ordinary disciple, I think no tolerable reason can be given why, in filling up the vacancy made by the death of Judas, he, being so eminently qualified for the place, should not have been propounded as well as either Barsabas or Matthias, but that he was one of the twelve already. Nor, indeed, is it reasonable to suppose that Bartholomew should be his proper name, any more than Barjona the proper name of Peter, importing no more than his relative capacity, either as a son or a scholar. As a son it notes no more than his being "the son of Tholmai," a name not uncommon amongst the Jews, it being customary among them for the son thus to derive his name; so Barjona, Bartimeus, the son of Timæus, &c., and to be usually called rather by this relative than his own proper name:

proves how much may be done in apostolic biography by the diligent accumulation of the incidents found scattered in the recognized sources of information. But the very brevity of the life of Philip, and some others of the apostles, conveys a moral of itself. How tempered ought to be the love and desire of personal fame, when it is seen, that those who were made the pillars of the everlasting church of God, took so little care to leave any memorial of themselves but that which is found in the name of the ministers—the apostles—the sent of Christ!—
Ed.

* John xxi. 1, 2.

† Ibid. v. 14.

thus Joseph was called Barsabas; thus Barnabas constantly so styled, though his right name was Josès. Or else it may relate to him as a disciple of some particular sect and institution among the Jews; it being a custom for scholars, out of a great reverence for their masters, or first instructors of that way, to adopt their names, as Ben-ezra, Ben-uziel, &c. And this will be much more evident if the observation which one makes be true, (which yet I will not contend for,) that as several sects in the Jewish church denominated themselves from some famous person of that nation, the Essenes from Enosh, the Sadducees from Sadoe, so there were others that called themselves Tholmeans, from Tholmai, scholar to Heber, the ancient master of the Hebrews, who was of the race or institution of the Enakin, who flourished in Debir and Hebron, with whom Abraham was confederate, that is, joined himself to their society. And of this order and institution, he tells us, Nathanael seems to have been, hence called Bartholomew, the son or scholar of the Tholmeans; hence said to be "an Israelite indeed," that is, one of the ancient race of the schools and societies of Israel. This, if so, would give us an account of his skill and ability in the Jewish law, wherein he is generally supposed to have been a doctor or teacher. But whichever of these two accounts of his denomination shall find most favor with the reader, either of them will serve my purpose, and reconcile the difference that seems to be between St. John and the other evangelists about his name; the one styling him by his proper name, the other by his relative and paternal title. To all this, if necessary, I might add the consent of learned men, who have given in their suffrages in this matter, that it is but the same person under several names. But hints of this may suffice. These arguments, I confess, are not so forcible and convictive as to command assent; but with all their circumstances considered, are sufficient to incline and sway any man's belief. The great and indeed only reason brought against it, is what St. Augustine objected of old, that it is not probable that our Lord would choose Nathanael, a doctor of the law, to be one of his apostles, as designing to confound the wisdom of the world by the preaching of the idiot and the unlearned. But this is no reason to him that considers, that this objection equally lies against St. Philip, for whose skill in the law and prophets there is as much evidence, in the history of the gospel, as for Nathanael's; and much more strongly against St. Paul, than whom (besides his abilities in all human learning) there were few greater masters in the Jewish law.

3. This difficulty being cleared, we proceed to a more particular account of our apostle. By some he is thought to have been a Syrian, of a noble extract, and to have derived his pedigree from the Ptolomies of Egypt, upon no other ground, I believe, than the mere analogy and sound of the name. It is plain that he, as the rest of the apostles, was a Galilean; and of Nathanael we know it is particularly said, that he was of Cana in Galilee. The Scripture takes no notice of his trade or way of life, though some circumstances might seem to intimate that he was a fisherman, which Theodoret affirms of the apos-

tles in general, and another particularly reports of our apostle. At his first coming to Christ (supposing him still the same with Nathanael) he was conducted by Philip, who told him that now they had found the long-looked for Messiah, so oft foretold by Moses and the prophets, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph :"^{*} and when he objected, that the Messiah could not be born at Nazareth, Philip bids him come and satisfy himself. At his first approach our Lord entertains him with this honorable character, that he was an Israelite indeed, a man of true simplicity and integrity; as indeed his simplicity particularly appears in this, that when told of Jesus he did not object against the meanness of his original, the low condition of his parents, the narrowness of their fortunes, but only against the place of his birth, which could not be Nazareth; the prophets having peremptorily foretold, that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem. By this, therefore, he appeared to be a true Israelite; one that "waited for redemption in Israel;" which from the date of the Scripture predictions, he was assured did now draw nigh. Surprised he was at our Lord's salutation, wondering how he should know him so well at first sight, whose face he had never seen before. But he was answered, that he had seen him while he was yet under the fig-tree, before Philip called him. Convinced with this instance of our Lord's divinity, he presently made his confession, that now he was sure that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Son of God, whom he had appointed to be the king and governor of his church. Our Saviour told him, that if upon this inducement he could believe him to be the Messiah, he should have far greater arguments to confirm his faith; yea, that ere long he should behold the heavens opened to receive him, and the angels visibly appearing to wait and attend upon him.

4. Concerning our apostle's travels up and down the world, to propagate the Christian faith, we shall present the reader with a brief account, though we cannot warrant the exact order of them. That he went as far as India is owned by all, which surely is meant of the hither India, or the part of it lying next to Asia. Socrates tells us, it was the India bordering upon Æthiopia, meaning no doubt the Asian Æthiopia; (whereof we shall speak in the life of St Thomas;) Sophronius calls it the fortunate India; and tells us that here he left behind him St. Matthew's gospel, whereof Eusebius gives a more particular relation: that when Pantenus, a man famous for his skill in philosophy, and especially the institutions of the Stoics, but much more for his hearty affection to Christianity, in a devout and zealous imitation of the apostles, was inflamed with a desire to propagate the Christian religion upon the eastern countries; he came as far as India itself. Here, amongst some that yet retained the knowledge of Christ, he found St. Matthew's gospel written in Hebrew, left here (as the tradition was) by St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, when he preached the gospel to these nations.

5. After his labors in these parts of the world, he returned to the more western and northern parts of Asia. At Hierapolis, in Phrygia, we find him in

company with St. Philip, instructing that place in the principles of Christianity, and convincing them of the folly of their blind idolatries. Here, by the enraged magistrates, he was at the same time with Philip designed for martyrdom: in order whereunto he was fastened upon the cross, with an intent to despatch him; but upon a sudden conviction that the Divine justice would revenge their death, he was taken down again and dismissed. Hence, probably, he went into Lycaonia; the people whereof Chrysostom assures us, he instructed and trained up in the Christian discipline. His last remove was to Albanople, in Armenia the Great, (the same no doubt which Nicephorus calls Urbanople, a city of Cilicia,) a place miserably overgrown with idolatry; from which, while he sought to reclaim the people, he was, by the governor of the place, commanded to be crucified; which he cheerfully underwent, comforting and confirming the convert Gentiles to the last minute of his life. Some add, that he was crucified with his head downwards; others that he was flayed, and his skin first taken off, which might consist well enough with his crucifixion, excoriation being a punishment in use, not only in Egypt, but amongst the Persians, next neighbors to these Armenians, (as Ammianus Marcellinus assures us; and Plutarch records a particular instance of Mesabates, the Persian eunuch, first flayed alive, and then crucified,) from whom they might easily borrow this piece of barbarous and inhuman cruelty. Respecting the several stages to which his body was removed after his death; first to Daras, a city in the borders of Persia, then to Liparis, one of the Æolian islands; thence to Beneventum, in Italy, and last of all to Rome; they that are fond of those things, and have better leisure, may inquire. Heretics persecuted his memory after his death, no less than heathens did his person while alive, by forging and fathering a fabulous gospel upon his name; which, together with others of like stamp, Gelasius, bishop of Rome, justly branded as apocryphal, altogether unworthy the name and patronage of an apostle. And perhaps of no better authority is the sentence which Dionysius, the pretended Areopagite, records of our apostle, *καὶ πολλὴν θεολογίαν εἶναι, καὶ εὐαγγελίῳ. Καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πλατὺ καὶ μέγα, καὶ αὐτὸς συντετμημένον*, "that theology is both copious, and yet very small; and the gospel diffuse and large, and yet withal concise and short," which he, according to his vein, expounds concerning the boundless benignity, but withal incomprehensibility of the divine nature, which is *βραχυλεκτός ἀμα καὶ ἀλόγος*, quickly despatched, because ineffable, and is not without the veil discoverable to any, but those that have got above, not only all sense and matter, but of all sense and understanding; that is, to the very height of mystical and unintelligible religion.

ST. MATTHEW.

ST. MATTHEW, called also Levi, was, though a Roman officer, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, (both his names speaking him purely of Jewish extract and original,) and probably a Galilean, and whom I should have concluded born at or near Caper-

^{*} John i. 45.

naum; but that the Arabic writer of his life tells us, he was born at Nazareth, a city in the tribe of Zebulun, famous for the habitation of Joseph and Mary, but especially for the education and residence of our blessed Saviour: who, though born at Bethlehem, was both conceived and bred up here, where he lived the whole time of his private life, whence he derived the title of Jesus of Nazareth. St. Matthew was the son of Alpheus and Mary, sister or kinswoman to the blessed virgin: in the same Arabic author his father is called Ducu, and his mother Karutias, both originally descended of the tribe of Issachar; nothing being more common among the Jews, than for the same person to have several names; these latter probably expressed in Arabic, according to their Jewish signification. His trade or way of life was that of a publican, or toll-gatherer, to the Romans; (which probably had been his father's trade; his name denoting a broker, or money-changer,) an office of bad report among the Jews. Indeed, among the Romans, it was accounted a place of power and credit, and honorable reputation, not ordinarily conferred upon any but Roman knights; insomuch, that T. Fl. Sabinus, father to the Emperor Vespasian, was the publican of the Asian provinces, an office which he discharged so much to the content and satisfaction of the people, that they erected statues to him with this inscription: ΚΑΛΩΣ ΤΕΛΩΝΗΣΑΝΤΙ, "To him that has well managed the publican-office." These officers being sent into the provinces to gather the tributes, were wont to employ the natives under them, as persons best skilled in the affairs and customs of their own country. Two things especially concurred to render this office odious to the Jews. First, that the persons that managed it were usually covetous and great exactors; for having themselves farmed the customs of the Romans, they must gripe and scrape by all methods of extortion, that they might be able both to pay their rent, and to raise gain and advantage to themselves: which doubtless Zacchæus, the chief of these farmers, was sensible of, when, after his conversion, he offered four-fold restitution to any man from whom he had taken any thing by fraud and evil arts.* And upon this account they became infamous even among the Gentiles themselves, who commonly speak of them as cheats, and thieves, and public robbers, and worse members of a community, more voracious and destructive in a city than wild beasts in the forest. The other thing that made the Jews so much detest them was, that this tribute was not only a grievance to their purses, but an affront to the liberty and freedom of their nation; for they looked upon themselves as a free-born people, and that they had been immediately invested in this privilege by God himself, and accordingly beheld this as a daily and standing instance of their slavery; which of all other things they could least endure, and which therefore betrayed them into so many unfortunate rebellions against the Romans. Add to this, that these publicans were not only obliged, by the necessity of their trade, to have frequent dealings and converse with the Gentiles, (which the Jews held unlawful and abominable,) but that, being Jews themselves,

they rigorously exacted these things of their brethren, and thereby seemed to conspire with the Romans to entail perpetual slavery upon their own nation. For, though Tertullian thought that none but Gentiles were employed in this sordid office, yet the contrary is too evident to need any argument to prove it.

2. By these means publicans became so universally abhorred by the Jewish nation, that it was accounted unlawful to do them any office of common kindness and courtesy; nay, they held it no sin to cozen and overreach a publican, and that with the solemnity of an oath; they might not eat or drink, walk or travel with them; they were looked upon as common thieves and robbers; and money received of them might not be put to the rest of a man's estate, it being presumed to have been gained by rapine and violence; they were not admitted as persons fit to give testimony and evidence in any cause: so infamous were they, as not only to be banished all communion in the matters of divine worship, but to be shunned in all affairs of civil society and commerce, as the pests of their country, persons of an infectious converse, of as vile a class as heathens themselves. Hence the common proverb among them: "Take not a wife out of that family wherein there is a publican, for they are all publicans;" that is, thieves, robbers, and wicked sinners. To this proverbial usage our Lord alludes, when speaking of a contumacious sinner, whom neither private reproofs, nor the public censures and admonitions of the church can prevail upon: "Let him be unto thee" (says he) "as an heathen and a publican;"* as elsewhere, publicans and sinners are yoked together, as persons of equal esteem and reputation. Of this trade and office was our St. Matthew; and it seems more particularly to have consisted in gathering the customs of commodities that came by the sea of Galilee, and the tribute which passengers were to pay that went by water; a thing frequently mentioned in the Jewish writings; where we are also told of the ticket, consisting of two greater letters written in paper or some such matter, called the ticket or signature of the publicans, which the passenger had with him to certify them on the other side the water, that he had already paid the toll or custom: upon which account, the Hebrew gospel of St. Matthew, published by Munster, renders publican "the Lord of the passage." For this purpose they kept their office or custom-house by the sea-side, that they might be always near at hand; and here it was (as St. Mark intimates) that Matthew had his toll-booth, where "he sat at the receipt of custom."

3. Our Lord having lately cured a famous paralytic, retired out of Capernaum, to walk by the sea-side,† where he taught the people that flocked after him. Here he espied Matthew, sitting in his custom-office, whom he called to come and follow him: the man was rich, had a wealthy and gainful trade, was a wise and prudent person, (no fools being put into that office,) and understood, no doubt, what it would cost him to comply with this new employment; that he must exchange wealth for poverty, a custom-house for a prison, gainful

* Luke xix. 8

* Matth. xviii. 17.

† Matth. ix. 9; Mark ii. 13, 14; Luke v. 27—29.

masters for a naked and despised Saviour. But he overlooked all these considerations, left all his interests and relations, to become our Lord's disciple, and to embrace (as Chrysostom observes,) a more spiritual way of commerce and traffic. We cannot suppose that he was before wholly unacquainted with our Saviour's person or doctrine, especially living at Capernaum, the place of Christ's usual residence, where his sermons and miracles were so frequent; by which he could not but in some measure be prepared to receive the impressions which our Saviour's call now made upon him. And to show that he was not discontented at his change nor apprehended himself a loser by this bargain, he entertained our Lord and his disciples at a great dinner in his house, whither he invited his friends, especially those of his own profession, piously hoping that they also might be caught by our Saviour's converse and company. The Pharisees, whose eye was constantly evil where another man's was good, and who would either find or make occasions to snarl at him, began to suggest to his disciples, that it was unbecoming so pure and holy a person as their master pretended himself to be, thus familiarly to converse with the worst of men, publicans and sinners, persons infamous to a proverb. But he presently replied to them, that they were the sick that needed the physician, not the sound and healthy; that his company was most suitable where the necessities of souls did most require it; that God himself preferred acts of mercy and charity, especially in reclaiming sinners, and doing good to souls, infinitely before all ritual observances, and the nice rules of persons conversing with one another; and that the main design of his coming into the world was not to bring the righteous, or those who, like themselves, proudly conceived themselves to be so, and in a vain opinion of their own strictness, loftily scorned all mankind besides; but sinners, modest, humble, self-convinced offenders, to repentance, and to reduce them to a better state and course of life.

4. After his election to the apostolate, he continued with the rest till our Lord's ascension; and then, for the first eight years at least, preached up and down Judæa. After which, being to betake himself to the conversion of the Gentile world, he was entreated by the convert Jews to commit to writing the history of our Saviour's life and actions, and to leave it among them as the standing record of what he had preached to them; which he did accordingly, and so composed his gospel, whereof more in due place. Little certainty can be had as to what travels he underwent for the advancement of the Christian faith, so irrecoverably is truth lost in a crowd of legendary stories. Æthiopia is generally assigned as the province of his apostolical ministry. Metaphrastes tells us, that he went first into Parthia, and having successfully planted Christianity in those parts, thence travelled into Æthiopia, that is, the Asiatic Æthiopia, lying near to India: where, by preaching and miracles, he mightily triumphed over errors and idolatry, convinced and converted multitudes, ordained spiritual guides and pastors to confirm and build them up, and bring over others to the faith, and then finished his own course. As for what is related by Nicephorus, of his going into the country of the cannibals, consti-

tuting Plato, one of his followers, bishop of Myrmæna; of Christ's appearing to him in the form of a beautiful youth, and giving him a wand, which on his pitching it into the ground, immediately grew up into a tree; of his strangely converting the prince of that country, of his numerous miracles, peaceable death, and sumptuous funerals, with abundance more of the same stamp and coin, they are justly to be reckoned amongst those fabulous reports that have no pillar or ground either of truth or probability to support them. Most probable it is (what an ancient writer affirms) that he suffered martyrdom at Naddaber, a city of Æthiopia, but by what kind of death is altogether uncertain. Whether this Naddaber be the same with Beschberi, where the Arabic writer of his life affirms him to have suffered martyrdom, let others inquire: he also adds, that he was buried at Arthagānetu Cæsarea, but where that is, is to me unknown. Dorotheus makes him honorably buried at Hierapolis in Parthia, one of the first places to which he preached the gospel.

5. He was a great instance of the power of religion, how much a man may be brought off to a better temper. If we reflect upon his circumstances, while yet a stranger to Christ, we shall find that the world had very great advantages upon him. He was become a master of a plentiful estate, engaged in a rich and a gainful trade, supported by the power and favor of the Romans, prompted by covetous inclinations, and these confirmed by long habits and customs. And yet notwithstanding all this, no sooner did Christ call, but without the least scruple or dissatisfaction, he flung up all at once; and not only renounced (as St. Basil observes) his gainful incomes, but ran an immediate hazard of the displeasure of his masters that employed him, for quitting their service, and leaving his accounts entangled and confused behind him. Had our Saviour been a mighty prince, it had been no wonder that he should run over to his service; but when he appeared under all the circumstances of meanness and disgrace, when he seemed to promise his followers nothing but misery and suffering in this life, and to propound no other rewards but the invisible encouragements of another world; his change in this case was the more strange and admirable. Indeed so admirable, that Porphyry and Julian (two subtle and acute adversaries of the Christian religion) hence took occasion to charge him either with falsehood or with folly; either that he gave not a true account of the thing, or that it was very weakly done of him, so hastily to follow any one that called him. But the holy Jesus was no common person; in all his commands there was somewhat more than ordinary. Indeed St. Jerome conceives, that besides the divinity that manifested itself in his miracles, there was a divine brightness, and a kind of majesty in our Saviour's looks, that at first sight was attractive enough to draw persons after him. However his miraculous powers, that reflected a lustre from every quarter, and the efficacy of his doctrine accompanied with the grace of God, made way for the summons that was sent our apostle, and enabled him to conquer all oppositions that stood in the way to hinder him.

6. His contempt of the world further appeared in his exemplary temperance and abstemiousness

from all the delights and pleasures, yea, the ordinary conveniences and accommodations of it; so far from indulging his appetite with nice and delicate curiosities, that he refused to gratify it with lawful and ordinary provisions, eating no flesh; his usual diet being nothing but herbs, roots, seeds, and berries. But what appeared most remarkable in him, and which, though the least virtue in itself, is the greatest in a wise man's esteem and value, was his humility; mean and modest in his own conceit, in honor preferring others before himself. Whereas the other evangelists in describing the apostles by pairs, constantly place him before Thomas, he modestly places him before himself. The rest of the evangelists openly mention the honor of his apostleship, but speak of his former sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful course of life only under the name of Levi, while he himself sets it down, with all its circumstances, under his own proper and common name. Which as at once it commends his own candor and ingenuity, so it administers to us this not unuseful consideration, that the greatest sinners are not excluded the lines of divine grace; nor can any, if penitent, have just reason to despair, when publicans and sinners are taken in. And as St. Matthew himself does freely and impartially record his own vile and dishonorable course of life; so the two other evangelists, though setting down the story, take notice of him only under another name; to teach us to treat a penitent brother with all modesty and tenderness. "If a man repent" (say the Jews) "let no man say to him, Remember thy former works;" which they explain not only concerning Israelites, but even strangers and proselytes. If being against the rules of civility, as well as the laws of religion, when a man hath repented, to upbraid and reproach him with the errors and follies of his past life.

7. The last thing that calls for any remarks in the life of this apostle is his gospel, written at the entreaty of the Jewish converts; and as Epiphanius tells us, at the command of the apostles, while he was yet in Palestine, about eight years after the death of Christ: though Nicephorus will have it to have been written fifteen years after our Lord's ascension; and Irenæus yet much wider, who seems to imply that it was written while Peter and Paul preached at Rome, which was not, according to the common account, till near thirty years after. But most plain it is, that it must be written before the dispersion of the apostles, seeing St. Bartholomew (as we have noted in his life) took it along with him into India, and left it there. He wrote it in Hebrew, as primarily designing it for the use of his countrymen; and strange it is, that any should question its being originally written in that language, when the thing is so universally and uncontrollably asserted by all antiquity, not one that I know of, after the strictest inquiry I could make, dissenting in this matter, and who certainly had far greater opportunities of being satisfied in these things, than we can have at so great a distance. It was no doubt soon after translated into Greek, though by whom St. Jerome professes he could not tell; Theophylact says it was reported to have been done by St. John; but Athanasius more expressly attri-

butes the translation to St. James the Less. The best is, it matters not much whether it was translated by an apostle or some disciple, so long as the apostles approved the version, and that the church has ever received the Greek copy for authentic, and reposed it in the sacred canon. And therefore, when the late Arian advocate brings in one of his party, challenging the divine authority of this gospel, because but a translation, he might have remembered it is such a translation as has all the advantages of an original; as being translated while the apostles were yet in being to supervise and ratify it, and whose authority has always been held sacred and inviolable by the whole church of God. But the plain truth of the case is, St. Matthew is a back-friend to the anti-trinitarian cause, as recording that express command, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Which words must needs be supposititious, and added by some ignorant hand, for no other reason but because they make against them. Nay, the whole gospel we see must be discarded, rather than stand in the way of a dear and beloved opinion.

8. After the Greek translation was entertained, the Hebrew copy was chiefly owned and used by the Nazareni, a middle sect of men between Jews and Christians: with the Christians they believed in Christ, and embraced his religion; with the Jews they adhered to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law; and hence this gospel came to be styled "the Gospel according to the Hebrews," and "the Gospel of the Nazarenes." By them it was, by degrees, interpolated; several passages of the evangelical history, which they had heard either from the apostles or those who had familiarly conversed with them, being inserted, which the ancient fathers frequently refer to in their writings; as by the Ebionites it was mutilated, and many things cut off, for the same reason for which the followers of Cerinthus, though making use of the greatest part of it, rejected the rest, because it made so much against them. This Hebrew copy (though whether exactly the same as it was written by St. Matthew, I will not say) was found, among other books, in the treasury of the Jews at Tiberias, by Joseph a Jew, and after his conversion, a man of great honor and esteem in the time of Constantine: another, St. Jerome assures us, was kept in the library at Cæsarea in his time; and another by the Nazarenes at Bocræa, from whom he had the liberty to transcribe it, and which he afterwards translated both into Greek and Latin; with this particular observation, that in quoting the text of the Old Testament, the evangelist immediately follows the Hebrew, without taking notice of the translation of the Septuagint. A copy also of this gospel was, anno 485, dug up and found in the grave of Barnabas in Cyprus, transcribed with his own hand. But these copies are long since perished; and for those that have been since published to the world, both by Tile and Munster, were there no other argument, they too openly betray themselves, by their barbarous and improper style, not to be the genuine issue of that less corrupt and better age.

ST. THOMAS.

IT was customary with the Jews, when travelling into foreign countries, or familiarly conversing with the Greeks and Romans, to assume to themselves a Greek or a Latin name, of great affinity, and sometimes of the very same signification with that of their own country. Thus our Lord was called Christ, answering to his Hebrew title, Mashiach, or the anointed; Simon, styled Peter, according to that of Cephas, which our Lord put upon him; Tabitha, called Dorcas, both signifying a goat: thus our St. Thomas, according to the Syriac importance of his name, had the title of Didymus, which signifies a twin; Thomas which is called Didymus. Accordingly the Syriac version renders it Thama, which is called Thama; that is, a twin: the not understanding whereof imposed upon Nonnus the Greek paraphrast, who makes him *ἀνέρα διωνυμον*, to have had two distinct names,

— διωνυμος εννεπε Θωμας,
Ον Διδυμον καλεουσι —

it being but the same name expressed in different languages. The history of the gospel takes no particular notice either of the country or kindred of this apostle. That he was a Jew is certain, and in all probability a Galilean. He was born (if we may believe Symeon Metaphrastes) of very mean parents, who brought him up to the trade of fishing; but withal took care to give him a more useful education, instructing him in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereby he learned wisely to govern his life and manners. He was together with the rest called to the apostleship; and not long after gave an eminent instance of his hearty willingness to undergo the saddest fate that might attend them. For when the rest of the apostles dissuaded our Saviour from going into Judea, (whither he was now resolved for the raising his dear Lazarus, lately dead,) lest the Jews should stone him, as but a little before they had attempted it, St. Thomas desires them not to hinder Christ's journey thither, though it might cost their lives: "Let us also go, that we may die with him;"* probably concluding, that instead of raising Lazarus from the dead, they themselves should be sent with him to their own graves. So that he made up in pious affections what he seemed to want in the quickness and acumen of his understanding, not readily apprehending some of our Lord's discourses, nor over-forward to believe more than himself had seen. When the holy Jesus, a little before his fatal sufferings, had been speaking to them of the joys of heaven, and had told them that he was going to prepare, that they might follow him, that they knew both the place whither he was going, and the way thither; our apostle replied, that they knew not whither he went, and much less the way that led to it.† To which our Lord returns this short but satisfactory answer, that he was the true living way, the Person whom the Father had sent into the world to show men the paths of eternal life; and that they could not miss of heaven, if they did but keep to

that way which he had prescribed and chalked out before them.

2. Our Lord being dead, it is evident how much the apostles were distracted between hopes and fears concerning his resurrection, not yet fully satisfied about it; which engaged him the sooner to hasten his appearance, that by the sensible manifestations of himself he might put the case beyond all possibilities of dispute. The very day whereon he arose he came into the house where they were, while for fear of the Jews the doors were yet fast shut about them, and gave them sufficient assurance that he was really risen from the dead.* At this meeting St. Thomas was absent, having probably never recovered their company since their last dispersion in the garden, when every one's fears prompted him to consult his own safety. At his return, they told him that their Lord had appeared to them; but he obstinately refused to give credit to what they said, or to believe that it was he, presuming it rather a phantasm or mere apparition, unless he might see the very prints of the nails, and feel the wounds in his hands and sides. A strange piece of infidelity! Was this any more than what Moses and the prophets had long since foretold? Had not our Lord frequently told them in plain terms, that he must rise again the third day? Could he question the possibility of it, who had so often seen him do the greatest miracles? Was it reasonable to reject the testimony of so many eye-witnesses, ten to one against himself, and of whose fidelity he was assured? or could he think that either themselves should be deceived, or that they would jest and trifle with him in so solemn and serious a matter? A stubbornness that might have betrayed him into an eternal infidelity. But our compassionate Saviour would not take the advantage of the man's refractory unbelief, but on that day seven-night came again to them, as they were solemnly met at their devotions, and calling to Thomas, bade him look upon his hands, put his fingers into the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into the hole of his side, and satisfy his faith by a demonstration from sense. The man was quickly convinced of his error and obstinacy, confessing that he now acknowledged him to be his very Lord and master; a God omnipotent, that was thus able to rescue himself from the powers of death. Our Lord replied no more, than that it was well he believed his own senses, but that it was a more noble and commendable act of faith to acquiesce in a rational evidence, and to entertain the doctrines and relations of the gospel upon such testimonies and assurances of the truth of things, as will satisfy a wise and sober man, though he did not see them with his own eyes.

3. The blessed Jesus being gone to heaven, and having eminently given gifts and miraculous powers to the apostles, St. Thomas moved thereto by some divine intimation, is said to have despatched Thaddæus, one of the seventy disciples to Abgarus, toparch of Edessa, (between whom and our Saviour the letters commonly said to have passed, are still extant in Eusebius,) whom he first cured of an inveterate distemper, and after converted him and his subjects to the faith. The apostolical province assigned to St. Thomas, (as Origen tells

* John xi. 16.

† John xiv. 5.

* John xx. 19.

us,) was Parthia; after which Sophronius and others inform us, that he preached the gospel to the Medes, Persians, Carmans, Hyrcani, Bactrians, and the neighbor nations. In Persia, one of the ancients (upon what ground I know not) acquaints us, that he met with the magi, or wise men, who came that long journey, from the east, to bring presents to our new-born Saviour, whom he baptized and took along with him as his companions and assistants in the propagation of the gospel. Hence he preached in and passed through Æthiopia; that is, (that we may a little clear this by the way,) the Asian Æthiopia, conterminous to, if not the same with Chaldæa; whence Tacitus does not only make the Jews descendants from the Æthiopians, as whose ancestors came from Ur of the Chaldeans; but Hesychius makes the inhabitants of Zagrus, a mountain beyond Tigris, "a people of the Æthiopians;" this is mentioned by Benjamin the Jew, in his Itinerary, the land of Cush, or Æthiopia; the inhabitants whereof are styled by Herodotus, "the oriental Æthiopians," by way of distinction from those who lived south of Egypt, and were under the same military prefecture with the Arabians, under the command of Arsames, as the other were joined with the Indians; and in the same place are called *οι εκ της Ασίας Αιθιοπες*, the Asian Æthiopians. Having travelled through these countries, he at last came into India. We are told by Nicephorus, that he was at first unwilling to venture himself into those countries, fearing he should find their manners as rude and intractable as their faces were black and deformed, till encouraged by a vision, that assured him of the divine presence to assist him; he travelled a great way into those eastern nations, as far as the island Taprobane, since called Sumatra, and the country of the Brachmans, preaching every where with all the arts of gentleness and mild persuasives; not flying out into tart invectives, and furious heats against their idolatrous practices, but calmly instructing them in the principles of Christianity; by degrees persuading them to renounce their follies, knowing that confirmed habits must be cured by patience and long forbearing, by slow and gentle methods: and by these means he wrought upon the people, and brought them over from the grossest errors and superstition to the hearty belief and entertainment of religion.

4. In want of better evidence from antiquity, it may not be amiss to inquire, what account the Portugals, in their first discoveries of these countries, received of these matters, partly from ancient monuments and writings, partly from constant and uncontrolled traditions, which the Christians, whom they found in those parts, preserved amongst them. They tell us, that St. Thomas came first to Socotora, an island in the Arabian sea; thence to Cranganor, where having converted many, he travelled further into the east; and having successfully preached the gospel, returned back into the kingdom of Cormandel; where, at Malipur, the metropolis of the kingdom, not far from the influx of the Ganges into the gulf of Bengala, he began to erect a place for divine worship, till prohibited by the priests and Sagamo, prince of that country. But, upon the conviction of several miracles, the work went on, and the Sagamo himself embraced the Christian faith,

whose example was soon followed by great numbers of his friends and subjects. The Brachmans, who plainly perceived that this would certainly spoil their trade, and in time extirpate the religion of their country, thought it high time to put a stop to this growing novelism; and resolved in council, that some way or other the apostle must be put to death. There was a tomb not far from the city, whither the apostle was wont to retire to his solitudes and private devotions; hither the Brachmans and their armed followers pursue the apostle; and while he was intent at prayer, they first load him with darts and stones, till one of them coming nearer, ran him through with a lance. His body was taken up by his disciples, and buried in the church which he had lately built, and which was afterwards improved into a fabric of great stateliness and magnificence. Gregory of Tours relates many miracles done upon the annual solemnities of his martyrdom; and one standing miracle, an account whereof, he tells us, he received from one Theodorus, who had himself been in that place, viz. that in the temple where the apostle was buried, there hung a lamp before his tomb, which burnt perpetually, without oil or fuel to feed and nourish it; the light whereof was never diminished, nor by wind or any other accident could be extinguished. But whether travellers might not herein be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of the priests, or those who did attend the church; or if true, whether it might not be performed by art, I leave to others to inquire. Some will have his body to have been afterwards translated to Edessa, a city in Mesopotamia; but the Christians in the east constantly affirm it to have remained in the place of his martyrdom, where (if we may believe relations) it was after dug up, with great cost and care, at the command of Don Emanuel Frea, governor of the coast of Cormandel; and together with it was found the bones of the Sagamo, whom he had converted to the faith.

5. While Don Alfonso Sousa, one of the vice-roys in India under John the Third, king of Portugal, resided in these parts, certain brass tables were brought to him, whose ancient inscriptions could scarce be read, till at last, by the help of a Jew, an excellent antiquary, they were found to contain nothing but a donation made to St. Thomas, whereby the king, who then reigned, granted to him a piece of ground for the building of a church. They tell us also of a famous cross, found in St. Thomas's chapel at Malipur, wherein was an unintelligible inscription, which, by a learned Bramin, (whom they compelled to read and expound it,) gave an account to this effect; that Thomas, a divine person, was sent into those countries by the Son of God in the time of king Sagamo, to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God; that he built a church, and performed admirable miracles; but at last, while upon his knees at prayer, was by a Brachman thrust through with a spear; and that that cross, stained with his blood, had been left as a memorial of these matters: an interpretation that was afterwards confirmed by another grave and learned Bramin, who expounded the inscription to the very same effect. The judicious reader will measure his belief of these things by the credit of the reporters, and the rational probability of the things them-

selves, which, for my part, as I cannot certainly affirm to be true, so I will not utterly conclude them to be false.

6. From these first plantations of Christianity in the Eastern Indies by our apostle, there is said to have been a continued series and succession of Christians (hence called St. Thomas-Christians) in those parts unto this day. The Portugals, at their first arrival here, found them in great numbers in several places, no less, as some tells us, than fifteen or sixteen thousand families. They are very poor, and their churches generally mean and sordid, wherein they had no images of saints, nor any representations but that of the cross: they are governed in spirituals by a high-priest, (whom some make an Armenian patriarch, of the sect of Nestorius, but in truth is no other than the patriarch of Muzal; the remainder, as is probable, of the ancient Selencia, and by some, though erroneously, styled Babylon,) residing northward in the mountains; who, together with twelve cardinals, two patriarchs, and several bishops, disposes all affairs referring to religion; and to him all the Christians of the east yield subjection. They promiscuously admit all to the holy communion, which they receive under both kinds, of bread and wine; though instead of wine, which their country affords not, making use of the juice of raisins, steeped one night in water, and then pressed forth. Children, unless in case of sickness, are not baptized till the fortieth day. At the death of friends, their kindred and relations keep an eight-days' feast in memory of the departed. Every Lord's day they have their public assemblies for prayer and preaching, their devotions being managed with great reverence and solemnity. Their Bible, at least the New Testament, is in the Syriac language, to the study whereof the preachers earnestly exhort the people. They observe the times of Advent and Lent, the festivals of our Lord, and many of the saints; those especially that relate to St. Thomas, the Dominica in Albis, or Sunday after Easter, in memory of the famous confession which St. Thomas on that day made of Christ, after he had been sensibly cured of his unbelief; another, on the first of July, celebrated not only by Christians, but by Moors and Pagans, the people who come to his sepulchre on pilgrimage, carrying away a little of the red earth of the place where he was interred, which they keep as an inestimable treasure, and conceit it sovereign against diseases. They have a kind of monasteries of the religious, who live in great abstinence and chastity. Their priests are shaven in fashion of a cross, have leave to marry once, but denied a second time: no marriages to be dissolved, but by death. These rites and customs they solemnly pretend to have derived from the very time of St. Thomas, and with the greatest care and diligence do observe them at this day.*

ST. JAMES THE LESS.

BEFORE we can enter upon the life of this apostle, some difficulty must be cleared relating to his person. Doubted it has been by some, whether this was the same with that St. James that was bishop of Jerusalem, three of this name being presented to us; St. James the Great, this St. James the Less, (both apostles,) and a third, surnamed the Just, distinct (say they) from the former, and bishop of Jerusalem. But this (however pretending to some little countenance from antiquity) is a very great mistake, and built upon a sandy bottom: for besides that the Scripture mentions no more than two of this name, and both apostles, nothing can be plainer, than that that St. James the apostle, whom St. Paul calls our Lord's brother, and reckons with Peter and John, one of the pillars of the church, was the same that presided among the apostles, (no doubt by virtue of his place,) it being his episcopal chair, and determined in the Synod at Jerusalem. Nor does either Clemens Alexandrinus, or Eusebius out of him, mention any more than two: St. James, put to death by Herod, and St. James the Just, bishop of Jerusalem, whom they expressly affirm to be the same with him whom St. Paul calls the brother of our Lord. Once, indeed, Eusebius makes our St. James one of the seventy, though elsewhere quoting a place of Clemens of Alexandria, he numbers him with the chief of the apostles, and expressly distinguished him from the seventy disciples. Nay, St. Jerome, though when representing the opinion of others, he styles him the thirteenth apostle, yet elsewhere, when speaking his own sense, sufficiently proves that there were but two, James the son of Zebedee, and the other the son of Alphæus; the one surnamed the greater, the other the less. Besides that the main support of the other opinion is built upon the authority of Clemens's Recognitions, a book in doubtful cases of no esteem and value.

2. This doubt being removed, we proceed to the history of his life. He was the son (as we may probably conjecture) of Joseph, (afterwards husband of the blessed virgin, and his first wife, whom St. Jerome, from tradition, styles Escha; Hippoletus, bishop of Porto, Salome; and further adds, that she was the daughter of Aggi, brother to Zacharias, father to John the Baptist: hence reputed our Lord's brother, in the same sense that he was reputed the son of Joseph. Indeed we find several spoken of in the history of the gospel, who were Christ's brethren; but in what sense, was controverted of old. St. Jerome,

Christianity in the region of Malabar, was not the disciple of Christ, but a certain Manichean, who obeying the zealous spirit which appears in many instances to have inspired the followers of that great heresiarch, conveyed the doctrines of his Master, as so much of Christianity as was conformable to those doctrines to this distant region. But, after all, there is no improbability in the tradition respecting the journeys of the apostle; and it is on the whole far more reasonable to ascribe the first planting of the gospel in so remote a part of the world to an inspired and divinely appointed, and divinely protected minister of Christ, than to an obscure and bewildered heretic.—Ed.

* In the learned work of La Croze, "*Historie du Christianisme des Judes*," much curious information is given on the subject of the first planting of Christianity in those countries which are said to have been converted by the apostles. La Croze himself, however, inclines to the opinion that the Thomas whose memory is received as the first teacher of

Chrysostom, and some others, will have them so called, because the sons of Mary, cousin-german, or according to the custom of the Hebrew language, sister to the virgin Mary. But Eusebius, Epiphanius, and the far greater part of the ancients (from whom, especially in matters of fact, we are not rashly to depart) make them the children of Joseph, by a former wife. And this seems most genuine and natural, the evangelists seeming very express and accurate in the account which they give of them: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Jude? and his sisters (whose names, says the foresaid Hippolytus, were Esther and Tamar) are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man these things?" By which it is plain, that the Jews understood these persons not to be Christ's kinsmen only, but his brothers, the same carpenter's sons, having the same relation to him that Christ himself had: though indeed they had more, Christ being but his reputed, they his natural sons. Upon this account the blessed virgin is sometimes called "the mother of James and Joses;" for so, amongst the women that attended at our Lord's crucifixion, we find three eminently taken notice of, "Mary Magdalen, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.* Where, by "Mary, the mother of James and Joses," no other can be meant than the virgin Mary: it not being reasonable to suppose that the evangelists should omit the blessed virgin, who was certainly there; and therefore St. John, reckoning up the same persons, expressly styles her "the mother of Jesus." And though it is true she was but St. James's mother-in-law, yet the evangelists might choose so to style her, because commonly so called after Joseph's death; and probably (as Gregory of Nyssa thinks) known by that name all along, choosing that title that the Son of God, whom as a virgin she had brought forth, might be better concealed, and less exposed to the malice of the envious Jews; nor is it any more wonder, that she should be esteemed and called the "mother of James," than that Joseph should be styled and accounted the "father of Jesus." To which add, that Josephus, eminently skilful in matters of genealogy and descent, expressly says, that our St. James was the "brother of Jesus Christ."† One thing there is that may seem to lie against it, that he is called "the son of Alphæus." But this may probably mean no more, than either that Joseph was so called by another name, (it being frequent, yea, almost constant among the Jews for the same person to have two names; *Quis unquam prohibuerit duobus vel tribus nominibus hominem unum vocari?* as St. Augustin speaks in a parallel case,) or (as a learned man conjectures) it may relate to his being a disciple of some particular sect or synagogue among the Jews, called Alphæans; denoting a family or society of devout and learned men of somewhat more eminency than the rest, there being, as he tells us, many such at this time among the Jews; and in this probably St. James had entered himself, the great reputation of his

piety and strictness, his wisdom, parts, and learning rendering the conjecture above the censure of being trifling and contemptible.

3. Of the place of his birth the sacred story makes no mention. The Jews, in their Talmud, (for doubtless they intend the same person,) style him more than once "a man of the town of Sechania;" though where that was, I am not able to conjecture. What was his particular way and course of life before his being called to the discipleship and apostolate, we find no intimations of in the history of the gospel, nor is there any distinct account concerning him during our Saviour's life. After the resurrection he was honored with a particular appearance of our Lord to him, which though silently passed over by the evangelists, is recorded by St. Paul, next to the manifesting himself to the five hundred brethren at once, "he was seen of James," which is by all understood of our apostle. St. Jerome, out of the Hebrew gospel of the Nazarenes, (wherein many passages are set down, omitted by the evangelical historians,) gives us a fuller relation of it: viz. that St. James had solemnly sworn, that from the time that he had drunk of the cup at the institution of the supper, he would eat bread no more till he saw the Lord risen from the dead. Our Lord therefore being returned from the grave, came and appeared to him, commanded bread to be set before him, which he took, blessed, and brake, and gave to St. James, saying, "Eat thy bread, my brother, for the Son of man is truly risen from among them that sleep." After Christ's ascension, (though I will not venture to determine the precise time,) he was chosen bishop of Jerusalem, preferred before all the rest, for his near relation unto Christ; for this we find to have been the reason why they chose Symeon to be his immediate successor in that see, because he was after him our Lord's next kinsman. A consideration that made Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, though they had been peculiarly honored by our Saviour, not to contend for this high and honorable place, but freely chose James the Just to be bishop of it. This dignity is, by some of the ancients, said to have been conferred on him by Christ himself, constituting him bishop at the time of his appearing to him. But it is safest, with others, to understand it of its being done by the apostles, or possibly by some particular intimation concerning it, which our Lord might leave behind him.

4. To him we find St. Paul making his address after his conversion, by whom he was honored with the right-hand of fellowship.* To him Peter sent the news of his miraculous deliverance out of prison: "Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren;†" that is, to the whole church, and especially St. James, the bishop and pastor of it. But he was principally active in the synod at Jerusalem, in the great controversy about the Mosaic rites: for the case being opened by Peter, and further debated by Paul and Barnabas, at last stood up St. James to pass the final and decretory sentence, that the Gentile converts were not to be troubled with the bondage of the Jewish yoke, only that for a present accommodation some few indifferent rites should be observed; ushering in

* Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xiv. 40.

† Antiquit. Jud. lib. xx. c. 8, p. 698; Matt. x. 3.

* Gal. i. 19; ii. 9.

† Acts xii. 17.

the expedient with this positive conclusion: *δὲ οὐκ ἐγὼ κρίνω*, I thus judge or decide the matter; "this is my sentence" and determination.* A circumstance the more considerable, because spoken at the same time when Peter was in council, who produced no such intimation of his authority. Had the champions of the church of Rome but such a passage for Peter's judiciary authority and power, it would no doubt have made a louder noise in the world, than "Thou art Peter," or "Feed my sheep."

5. He administered his province with all possible care and industry, omitting no part of a diligent and faithful guide of souls; strengthening the weak, informing the ignorant, reducing the erroneous, reproofing the obstinate, and by the constancy of his preaching, conquering the stubbornness of that perverse and refractory generation that he had to deal with; many of the nobler and better sort being brought over to a compliance with the Christian faith. So careful, so successful in his charge, that he awakened the spite and malice of his enemies to conspire his ruin; a sort of men of whom the apostle has given too true a character, "that they please not God, and are contrary to all men." Vexed they were to see that St. Paul, by appealing to Cæsar, had escaped their hands; (malice is as greedy and insatiable as hell itself;) and they therefore now turn their revenge upon St. James, which not being able to effect under Festus's government, they more effectually attempted under the procuratorship of Albinus's successor, Ananus the younger, then high-priest, and of the sect of the Sadducees, (of all others, says Josephus,† the most merciless and implacable justicers,) resolving to despatch him before the new governor could arrive. To this end a council is hastily summoned, and the apostle with some others arraigned and condemned as violators of the law. But that the thing might be carried in a more plausible and popular way, they set the Scribes and Pharisees (craft's-masters in the arts of dissimulation) at work to ensnare him, who coming to him, began by flattering insinuations to set upon him. They tell him, that they all had a mighty confidence in him, and that the whole nation as well as they gave him the testimony of a most just man, and one that was no respecter of persons; that therefore, they desired he would correct the error and false opinion which the people had of Jesus, whom they looked upon as the Messiah, and would take this opportunity of the universal confluence to the paschal solemnity, to set them right in their notions about these things; and would, to that end, go up with them to the top of the temple, where he might be seen and heard by all. Being advantageously placed upon a pinnacle or wing of the temple, they made this address to him. "Tell us, O Justus, whom we have all the reason in the world to believe, that seeing the people are thus generally led away with the doctrine of Jesus that was crucified, tell us, what is this institution of the crucified Jesus?" To which the apostle answered with an audible voice: "Why do ye inquire of Jesus the Son of man? he sits in heaven

on the right hand of the majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven." The people below hearing it, glorified the blessed Jesus, and openly proclaimed "Hosanna to the Son of David." The Scribes and Pharisees perceived now that they had overshot themselves, and that instead of reclaiming they had confirmed the people in their error; that there was no way left, but presently to despatch him, that by his sad fate others might be warned not to believe him. Whereupon suddenly crying out, that Justus himself was seduced and become an impostor, they threw him down from the place where he stood; though bruised, he was not killed by the fall, but recovered so much strength, as to get upon his knees, and pray to heaven for them. Malice is of too bad a nature either to be pacified with kindness, or satisfied with cruelty; jealousy is not more the rage of a man than malice is the rage of the devil, the very soul and spirit of the apostate nature. Little portions of revenge do but inflame it, and serve to flesh it up into a fiercer violence. Vexed that they had not done his work, they fell fresh upon the poor remainders of his life; and while he was yet at prayer, and that a Rechabite, who stood by, (which, says Epiphanius, was Symeon, his kinsman and successor,) stepped in, and entreated them to spare him, a just and a righteous man, and who was then praying for them, they began to load him with a shower of stones, till one more mercifully cruel than the rest, with a fuller's club beat out his brains. Thus died this good man in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and about twenty-four years after Christ's ascension into heaven, (as Epiphanius tells us;) being taken away, to the great grief and regret of all good men; yea, of all sober and just persons even amongst the Jews themselves. He was buried (says Gregory, bishop of Tours) upon Mount Olivet, in a tomb which he had built for himself, and wherein he had buried Zacharias and old Symeon; which I am rather inclinable to believe than what Hegesippus reports, that he was buried near the temple in the place of his martyrdom, and that a monument was there erected for him, which remained a long time after; for the Jews were not ordinarily wont to bury within the city, much less so near the temple; and least of all would they suffer him, whom as a blasphemer and impostor they had so lately put to death.

6. He was a man of exemplary and extraordinary piety and devotion, educated under the strictest rules and institutions of religion, a priest (as we may probably guess) of the ancient order of the Rechabites; or rather, as Epiphanius conjectures, "according to the most ancient order and form of priesthood," when the sacerdotal office was the prerogative of the first-born; and such was St. James, the eldest son of Joseph, and thereby sanctified and set apart for it. Though, whether this way of priesthood at any time held under the Mosaic dispensation, we have no intimations in the holy story. But, however he came by it, upon some such account it must be that he had a privilege (which the ancients say was peculiar to him, probably because more frequently made use of by him than by any others) to enter *εἰς τὰ αἷα*; not into the "sancta sancto-

* Acts xv. 13.

† Josephus Antiquit. Jud. lib. xx. c. 8, p. 698.

rum," or "most holy of all," but the "sanctuary," or "holy place," whither the priests of the Aaronical order might come. Prayer was his constant business and delight; he seemed to live upon it, and to trade in nothing but the frequent returns of converse with heaven; and was therefore wont to retire alone into the temple to pray, which he always performed kneeling, and with the greatest reverence, till by his daily devotions his knees were become as hard and brawny as a camel's. And he who has told us, that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," himself found it true by his own experience, heaven lending a more immediate ear to his petitions; so that when in a time of great drought he prayed for rain, the heavens presently melted into fruitful showers. Nor was his charity towards men less than his piety towards God; he did good to all, watched over men's souls, and studied to advance their eternal interests; his daily errand into the temple was to pray for the happiness of the people, and that God would not severely reckon with them: he could forgive his fiercest enemies, and "overcome evil with good:" when thrown from the top of the temple, he made use of all the breath he had left in him, only to send up this petition to heaven for the pardon of his murderers: "I beseech thee, O Lord God, heavenly Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

7. He was of a most meek humble temper, honoring what was excellent in others, concealing what was valuable in himself; the eminency of his relation, and the dignity of his place, did not exalt him in lofty thoughts above the measures of his brethren, industriously hiding whatever might set him up above the rest. Though he was our Lord's brother, yet in the inscription of the epistle he styles himself but the "servant of the Lord Jesus, not so much as giving himself the title of an apostle. His temperance was admirable; he wholly abstained from flesh, and drank neither wine nor strong drink, nor ever used the bath. His holy and mortified mind was content with the meanest accommodations; he went bare-foot, and never wore other than linen garments. Indeed, he lived after the strictest rules of the Nazarite order; and as the mitre, or sacerdotal plate, which he wore upon his head, evinced his priesthood, which was rather after Melchisedeck's, or the priesthood of the first-born, than the Aaronical order; so his never shaving his head, nor using unguents, his habit and diet, and the great severity of his life, showed him to appertain to the Nazarite institution, to which he was holy, (says Hegesippus,) or consecrated from his mother's womb. A man of that divine temper that he was the love and wonder of his age, and for the reputation of his holy and religious life was universally styled James the Just. Indeed, the safety and happiness of the nation was reckoned to depend upon his prayers and interest in heaven, which gained him the honorable title of *Oblis* or *Ozliam*, the "defence" and "fortress of the people;" as if, when he was gone, their garrisons would be dismantled, and their strength laid level with the ground. And so we find it was, when some few years after his death the Roman army broke in upon them, and turned all into blood and ruin. And what wonder

if the judgments of God like a flood come rolling in upon a nation, when the sluices are plucked up, and the Moses taken away that before stood in the gap to keep them out? "Elisha died, and a band of the Moabites invaded the land."* In short, he was the delight of all good men, in so much favor and estimation with the people, that they used to flock after him, and strive who should touch, though it were but the hem of his garment; his very episcopal chair, wherein he used to sit, being (as Eusebius informs us) carefully preserved, and having a kind of veneration paid to it, even unto his time: loved and honored, not by his friends only, but by his enemies; the Jews in their Talmud, mentioning James as a worker of miracles in the name of "Jesus his master;" yea, the wisest of them looked upon his martyrdom as the inlet to all those miseries and calamities that soon after flowed in upon them. Sure I am, that Josephus particularly reckons the death of this St. James as that which more immediately alarmed the divine vengeance, and hastened the universal ruin and destruction of that nation.

8. He wrote only one epistle, probably not long before his martyrdom, as appears by some passages in it relating to the near approaching ruin of the Jewish nation. He directed it to the Jewish converts, dispersed up and down those eastern countries, to comfort them under sufferings, and confirm them against error. He saw a great degeneracy and declension of manners coming on, and that the purity of the Christian faith began to be undermined by the loose doctrines and practices of the Gnostics, who under a pretence of zeal for the legal rites, generally mixed themselves with the Jews; he beheld libertinism marching on apace, and the way to heaven made soft and easy, men declaiming against good works, as useless and unnecessary; and asserting a naked belief of the Christian doctrine to be sufficient to salvation. Against these the apostle opposes himself, presses purity, patience, and charity, and all the virtues of a good life; and by undeniable arguments evinces that that faith only that carries along with it obedience and a holy life, can justify us before God, and entitle us to eternal life. Besides this epistle, there is a kind of preparatory gospel ascribed to him, published under the name of ΠΡΩΤΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ, (still extant at this day,) containing the descent, birth, and first originals of Christ, and the virgin Mary; at the end whereof the author pretends to have written it at a time when Herod having raised a great tumult in Jerusalem, he was forced to retire into the wilderness. But, though in many things consistent enough with the history of the gospel, yet has it ever been rejected as spurious and apocryphal, forged in that licentious age, when men took the boldness to stamp any writing with the name of an apostle.†

* 2 Kings xiii. 20.

† The character given of St. James by Josephus and others, affords a very valuable, because undesigned testimony to the truth of the gospel. He was not only devout, but singularly pure and upright in his conversation; and if the perception and love of truth have any thing to do with the moral character, he was thus especially qualified for determining what degree of credit ought to be given to the claims of Christ.

ST. SIMON THE ZEALOT.

ST. SIMON the apostle was, as some think, one of the four brothers of our Saviour, sons of Joseph by his former marriage,* though no other evidence appear for it, but that there was a Simon, one of the number; too infirm a foundation to build any thing more on than a mere conjecture. In the catalogue of the apostles he is styled Simon the Canaanite; whence some, led by no other reason than I know of than the bare sound of the name, have concluded him born at Cana in Galilee; as for the same reason others have made him the bridegroom, at whose marriage our Lord was there present, when he honored the solemnity with his first miracle, turning water into wine.— But this word has no relation to his country, or the place from whence he borrowed his original, as plainly descending from a Hebrew word which signifies zeal, and denotes a hot and sprightly temper.† Therefore what some of the evangelists call Canaanite, others rendering the Hebrew by the Greek word, style Simon Zelotes, or the Zealot: so called, not (as Nicephorus thinks) from his burning zeal, and ardent affection to his master, and his eager desire to advance his religion in the world, but from his warm active temper, and zealous forwardness in some particular way and confession of religion before his coming to our Saviour.

2. For the better understanding of this we are to know, that as there were several sects and parties among the Jews, so was there one, either a distinct sect, or at least a branch of the Pharisees, called the sect of the Zealots: they were mighty assertors of the honor of the law, and the strictness and purity of religion, assuming a liberty to themselves to question notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of law; nay, when they thought good, and when the case required, executing capital vengeance upon them. Thus when a blasphemer cursed God by the name of any idol, (says Maimonides) the Zealots that next met him might immediately kill him, without ever bringing him before the Sanhedrim. They looked upon themselves as the successors of Phineas, who in a mighty passion for the honor of God, did immediate execution upon Zimri and Cozbi: an act which was "counted to him for righteousness unto all posterities for evermore;"‡ and God was so well pleased with it, that he made "with him and his seed after him the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for Israel."|| In imitation whereof these men took upon them to execute judgment in extraordinary cases, and that not only by the connivance, but with the leave both of the rulers and the people; till in after times, under a pretence of this, their zeal degenerated into all manner of licentiousness and wild extravagance, and they not only became the pests of the commonwealth at home, but opened the door for the Romans to break in upon them, to their final and irrecoverable ruin; they

were continually prompting the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and vindicate themselves into their native liberty; and when they had turned all things into hurry and confusion, themselves in the mean while fished in these troubled waters. Josephus gives a large account of them, and every where bewails them as the great plague of the nation. He tells us of them, that they scrupled not to rob any, to kill many of the prime of the nobility, under pretence of holding correspondence with the Romans, and betraying the liberty of their country; openly glorying, that herein they were the benefactors and saviors of the people. They abrogated the succession of ancient families, thrusting obscure and ignoble persons into the high-priest's office, that so they might oblige the most infamous villains to their party; and as if not content to injure men, they affronted heaven, and proclaimed defiance to the Divinity itself, breaking into and profaning the most holy place. Styling themselves Zealots, (says he) "as if their undertakings were good and honorable, while they were greedy and emulous of the greatest wickedness, and outdid the worst of men." Many attempts were made, especially by Annas the high-priest, to reduce them to order and sobriety. But neither force of arms, nor fair and gentle methods could do any good upon them; they held out, and went on in their violent proceedings, and joining with the Idumeans, committed all manner of outrage, slaying the high-priests themselves. Nay, when Jerusalem was strictly besieged by the Roman army, they ceased not to create tumults and factions within, and were indeed the main cause of the Jews ill success in that fatal war. It is probable, that all that went under the notion of this sect were not of this wretched and ungodly temper, but that some of them were of a better make, of a more sober and peaceable disposition. And as it is not to be doubted but that our Simon was of this sect in general, so there is reason to believe he was of the better sort. However, this makes no more reflection upon his being called to the apostleship, than it did for St. Matthew, who was before a publican, or St. Paul's being a Pharisee, and so zealously persecuting the church of God.

3. Being invested in the apostolical office, no further mention appears of him in the history of the gospel. Continuing with the apostles till their dispersion up and down the world, he then applied himself to the execution of his charge. He is said to have directed his journey towards Egypt, thence to Cyrene, and Africk, (this indeed Baronius is not willing to believe, being desirous that St. Peter should have the honor to be the first that planted Christianity in Africk) and throughout Mauritania and all Libya, preaching the gospel to those remote and barbarous countries. Nor could the coldness of the climate benumb his zeal, or hinder him from shipping himself and the Christian doctrine over to the western islands, yea, even to Britain itself. Here he preached and wrought many miracles; and after infinite troubles and difficulties which he underwent. (if we may believe our authors, whom, though Baronius in this case makes no great account of, yet never scruples freely to use their verdict and suffrage when they give in evidence to his purpose,) suffered

* Matt. x. 4; Mark iii. 18.

† Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13. ‡ Psal. cvi. 31.

|| Num. xxv. 11—13.

martyrdom for the faith of Christ, as is not only affirmed by Nicephorus and Dorotheus, but expressly owned in the Greek Menologies; where we are told, that he went at last into Britain, and having enlightened the minds of many with the doctrine of the gospel, was crucified by the infidels, and buried there.

4. I know indeed, that there want not those who tell us, that after his preaching the gospel in Egypt, he went into Mesopotamia, where he met with St. Jude the apostle, and together with him took his journey into Persia, where having gained a considerable harvest to the Christian faith, they were both crowned with martyrdom; which Baronius himself confesses to be founded on no better authority than the "Passions of the Apostles," a book which at every turn he rejects as trifling and impertinent, as false and fabulous. But wide is the mistake of those who confound our apostle with Symeon the son of Cleophas, successor to St. James the Just in the see of Jerusalem, who was crucified in the hundred and twentieth year of his age, in the persecution under Trajan: the different character of their persons, and the account both of their acts and martyrdoms being sufficiently distinguished in the writings of the church.

ST. JUDE.

THERE are three several names by which this apostle is described in the history of the gospel: Jude, Thaddeus, and Lebbaeus, it being usual in the holy volumes for the same person to have more proper names than one. For the first, it was a name common amongst the Jews, recommended to them as being the name of one of the great patriarchs of their nation. This name he seems to have changed afterwards for Thaddeus, a word springing from the same root, and of the very same import and signification, which might arise from a double cause; partly from the superstitious veneration which the Jews had for the name Jehova, (the nomen τετραγράμματον, or name consisting of four letters,) which they held unlawful to be pronounced by any but the high-priest; and not by him even, but at the most solemn times. Hence it was, that when any man had a name, wherein there was the major part of the letters of this ineffable title, (and such was Jehuda, or Juda,) they would not rashly pronounce it in common usage, but chose rather to mould it into another like it, and of the same importance, or that which had a near affinity and resemblance with it: partly from a particular dislike of the name of Judas among the apostles, the bloody and treasonable practices of Judas Iscariot having rendered that name very odious and detestable to them. To prevent therefore all possibility of mistake, and that they might not confound the righteous with the wicked, St. Matthew and Mark never call him by this, but by some other name, as no question for the same reason he both styles himself, and is frequently called by others, "Judas the brother of James;"* and that this was one great design of it, the evangelist

plainly intimates, when speaking of him, he says, "Judas, not Iscariot." For his name Lebbaeus, it seems to have been derived either from the Hebrew word, signifying a heart, whence St. Jerome renders it *Corculum*, probably to denote his wisdom and prudence; or else from a lion, and therein to have respect to old Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah: "That he should be as a lion, an old lion, and as a lion's whelp;" which probably might have a main stroke in fastening this name upon St. Jude. From this patriarchal prophecy, we are told, that one of the schools or synagogues of learned men among the Jews (who, to avoid confusion, were wont to distinguish themselves by different appellations) took occasion to denominate themselves Labii, as accounting themselves the scholars and descendants of this lion-like son of Jacob; and that St. Jude was of this society, and because of his eminency among them, retained the title of Labius, or as it was corruptly pronounced, Lebbaeus. I confess I should have thought the conjecture of a learned man very probable, that he might have derived this name from the place of his nativity, as being born at Lebba, a town, which he tells us, Pliny speaks of, in the province of Galilee, not far from Carmel; but that it is not Lebba, but Jebba in all copies of Pliny that I have seen. But let the reader please himself in which conjecture he likes best.

2. For his descent and parentage, he was of our Lord's kindred, Nicephorus truly making him the son of Joseph, and brother to James, bishop of Jerusalem; that there was a Jude one of the number is very evident: "Are not his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" which makes me the more to wonder at Scaliger, who so confidently denies that any of the evangelists ever mention a "Jude the brother of our Lord." St. Jerome seems often to confound him with Simon the Zealot, whose title he ascribes to him; though second thoughts set him right, as indeed common advertency could do no less, so plain is the account which the evangelists give of this matter. When called to the discipleship we find not, as not meeting with him till we find him enumerated in the catalogue of apostles; nor is any thing particularly recorded of him afterwards, more than one question that he propounded to our Saviour, who having told them what great things he and his Father would do, and what particular manifestations after his resurrection he would make of himself to his sincere disciples and followers, St. Jude, (whose thoughts as well as the rest were taken up with the expectations of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah,) not knowing how this could consist with the public solemnity of that glorious state they looked for, asked him, what was the reason that he would manifest himself to them, and not to the world? Our Lord replied, that the world was not capable of these divine manifestations, as being a stranger and an enemy to what should fit them for fellowship with heaven; that they were only good men, persons of a divine temper of mind, and religious observers of his laws and will, whom God would honor with these familiar converses, and admit to such particular acts of grace and favor.

* John xiv. 22.

* John xiv. 22.

3. Eusebius relates, that soon after our Lord's ascension, St. Thomas despatched Thaddeus, the apostle, to Abgarus, governor of Edessa, where he healed diseases, wrought miracles, expounded the doctrines of Christianity, and converted Abgarus and his people to the faith: for all which pains, when the toparch offered him vast gifts and presents, he refused them with a noble scorn, telling him, they had little reason to receive from others, what they had freely relinquished and left themselves. A large account of this whole affair is extant in Eusebius, translated by him out of Syriac, from the records of the city of Edessa. This Thaddeus St. Jerome expressly makes to be our St. Jude, though his bare authority is not in this case sufficient evidence; especially since Eusebius makes him no more than one of the seventy disciples, which he would scarce have done, had he been one of the twelve. He calls him, indeed, an apostle, but that may imply no more than according to the large acceptance of the word, that he was a disciple, a companion, and an assistant to them, as we know the seventy eminently were. Nor is any thing more common in ancient ecclesiastical writers, than for the first planters and propagators of Christian religion in any country to be honored with the name and title of apostles. But, however this be, at his first setting out to preach the gospel, he went up and down Judæa and Galilee, then through Samaria into Idumea, and to the cities of Arabia, and the neighbor countries; and after to Syria and Mesopotamia. Nicephorus adds, that he came at last to Edessa, where Abgarus was governor; and where the other Thaddæus, one of the seventy, had been before him. Here he perfected what the other had begun; and having, by his sermons and miracles, established the religion of our Saviour, died a peaceable and a quiet death; though Dorotheus makes him slain at Berytus, and honorably buried there.—By the almost general consent of the writers of the Latin church, he is said to have travelled into Persia, where, after great success in his apostolical ministry for many years, he was at last, for his free and open reproof of the superstitious rites and usages of the magi, cruelly put to death.

4. That he was one of the married apostles sufficiently appears from his grandsons, mentioned by Eusebius, of whom Hegesippus gives this account. Domitian, the emperor, whose enormous wickedness had awakened in him the quickest jealousies, and made him suspect every one that might look like a co-ival in the empire, had heard that there were some of the line of David and Christ's kindred that did yet remain. Two grandchildren of St. Jude, the brother of our Lord, were brought before him; and having confessed that they were of the race and posterity of David, he asked what possessions and estate they had: they told him, that they had but a very few acres of land, out of the improvement whereof they both paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labor, as by the hardness and callousness of their hands (which they then showed him) did appear. He then inquired of them concerning Christ, and the state of his kingdom, what kind of empire it was, and when and where it would commence. To which they replied, that his kingdom was not of this world, nor of the

seigniories and dominions of it, but heavenly and angelical, and would finally take place in the end of the world; when coming with great glory, he would judge the quick and the dead, and award all men recompences according to their works. The issue was, that looking upon the meanness and simplicity of the men, as below his jealousies and fears, he dismissed them without any severity used against them; who being now beheld not only as kinsmen, but as martyrs of our Lord, were honored by all, preferred to places of authority and government in the church, and lived till the times of Trajan.

5. St Jude left only one epistle of catholic and universal concernment, inscribed at large to all Christians. It was some time before it met with general reception in the church, or was taken notice of. The author, indeed, styles not himself an apostle, but no more does St. James, St. John, nor sometimes St. Paul himself. And why should he fare the worse for his humility, only for calling himself the "servant of Christ," when he might have added not only "apostle" but "the brother of our Lord?" The best is, he has added what was equivalent, "Jude, the brother of James," a character that can belong to none but our apostle; besides, that the title of the epistle, which is of great antiquity, runs thus, "The general Epistle of Jude the Apostle." One great argument, as St. Jerome informs us, against the authority of this epistle of old, was its quoting a passage out of an apocryphal book of Enoch. This book, called the "Apocalypse of Enoch," was very early extant in the church, frequently mentioned, and passages were cited out of it by Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and others, some of whom accounted it little less than canonical. But what, if our apostle had it not out of this apocryphal book, but from some prophecy current from age to age, handed to him by common tradition, or immediately revealed to him by the Spirit of God? But suppose it taken out of that book going under Enoch's name; this makes nothing against the authority of the epistle; every thing, I hope, is not presently false, that is contained in an apocryphal and uncanonical writing; nor does the taking a single testimony out of it any more infer the apostle's approbation of all the rest, than St. Paul's quoting a good sentence or two out of Menander, Aratus, and Epimenides, imply that he approved all the rest of the writings of those heathen poets. And indeed nothing could be more fit and proper than this way, if we consider that the apostle in this epistle chiefly argues against the Gnostics, who mainly traded in such traditionary and apocryphal writings, and probably in this very book of Enoch. The same account may be given of that other passage in this epistle, concerning the contention between Michael, the archangel, and the devil, about the burial of Moses's body, no where extant in the holy records, supposed to have been taken out of a Jewish writing, called the "Dismission of Moses," mentioned by some of the Greek fathers, under the title of "Ascension of Moses," in which this passage was upon record. Nor is it any more a wonder, that St. Jude should do this, than that St. Paul should put down Jannes and Jambres for the two magicians of Pharaoh that opposed Moses, which he

must either derive from tradition, or fetch out of some uncanonical author of those times, there being no mention of their names in Moses's relation of that matter. But be these passages whence they will, it is enough for us, that the Spirit of God has made them authentic, and consecrated them part of the holy canon.

6. Being thus satisfied in the canonicalness of this epistle, none but St. Jude could be the author of it; for who but he was the brother of St. James? a character by which he is described in the evangelical story more than once. Grotius, indeed, will needs have it written by a younger Jude, the fifteenth bishop of Jerusalem, in the reign of Adrian; and because he saw that that passage, "the brother of James," stood full in his way, he concludes, without any shadow of reason, that it was added by some transcriber. But is not this to make too bold with sacred things? is not this to indulge too great a liberty? This once allowed, it will soon open a door to the widest and most extravagant conjectures, and no man shall know where to find sure footing for his faith. But the reader may remember, what we have elsewhere observed concerning the posthumous annotations of that learned man. Not to say that there are many things in this epistle that evidently refer to the time of this apostle, and imply it to have been written upon the same occasion, and about the same time with the second epistle of Peter, between which and this there is a very great affinity both in words and matter; nay, there want not some that endeavor to prove this epistle to have been written no less than twenty-seven years before that of Peter; and that hence it was, that Peter borrowed those passages that are so near akin to those in this epistle. The design of the epistle is to preserve Christians from the infection of Gnosticism, the loose and debauched principles vented by Simon Magus and his followers, whose wretched doctrines and practices he briefly and elegantly represents, persuading Christians heartily "to contend for the faith that had been delivered to them;" and to avoid these pernicious seducers as pests and firebrands, not to communicate with them in their sins, lest they perished with them in that terrible vengeance that was ready to overtake them.

ST. MATTHIAS.

ST. MATTHIAS not being an apostle of the first election, immediately called and chosen by our Saviour, particular remarks concerning him are not to be expected in the history of the gospel. He was one of our Lord's disciples (and probably one of the seventy) that had attended on him the whole time of his public ministry, and after his death was elected into the apostleship upon this occasion. Judas Iscariot, (so called, probably, from the place of his nativity, "a man of Kerioth," a city anciently situate in the tribe of Judah) had been one of the twelve, immediately called by Christ to be one of his intimate disciples, equally impowered and commissioned with the rest to preach and work miracles, "was numbered with them, and had obtained part of their ministry;"

and yet all this while was a man of vile and corrupt design, branded with no meaner a character than thief and murderer: to let us see that there may be bad servants in Christ's own family, and that the wickedness of a minister does not evacuate his commission, nor render his office useless and ineffectual. The unworthiness of the instrument hinders not the ends of the ministration: seeing the efficacy of an ordinance depends not upon the quality of the person, but the divine institution and the blessing which God has entailed upon it. Judas preached Christ, no doubt with zeal and fervency, and for any thing we know, with as much success as the rest of the apostles; and yet he was a bad man, a man actuated by sordid and mean designs, one that had prostituted religion and the honor of his place to covetousness and evil arts. The love of money had so entirely possessed his thoughts, that his resolutions were bound for nothing but interest and advantage. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare." This covetous temper betrayed him, as in the issue, to the most fatal end, so to the most desperate attempt, *αυτος το παντων ανομιωτατον*, as Origen calls the putting Christ to death, the most prodigious impiety that the sun ever shone on, the betraying his innocent Lord into the hands of those who he knew would treat him with all the circumstances of insolent scorn and cruelty. How little does kindness work upon a disingenuous mind! It was not the honor of the place, to which, when thousands of others were passed by, our Lord had called him, the admitting him into a free and intimate fellowship with his person, the taking him to be one of his peculiar domestics and attendants, that could divert the wretch from his wicked purpose. He knew how desirous the great men of the nation were to get Christ into their hands, especially at the time of the passover, that he might, with the more public disgrace, be sacrificed before all the people, and therefore bargains with them, and for no greater a sum than under four pounds, to betray the "Lamb of God" into the paws of these wolves and lions: in short, he heads the party, conducts the officers, and sees him delivered into their hands.

2. But there is an active principle in man's breast, that seldom suffers daring sinners to pass in quiet to their graves: awakened with the horror of the fact, conscience began to rouse and follow close, and the man was unable to bear up under the furious revenges of his own mind: as indeed, all wilful and deliberate sins, and especially the guilt of blood, are wont more sensible to alarm the natural notions of our minds, and to excite in us the fears of some present vengeance that will seize upon us. And how intolerable are those scourges that lash us in this vital and tender part? The spirit of the man sinks under him, and all supports snap asunder: as what ease or comfort can he enjoy, that carries a vulture in his bosom, always gnawing and preying upon his heart? which made Plutarch compare an evil conscience to a cancer in the breast, that perpetually gripes and stings the soul with the pains of an intolerable repentance. Guilt is naturally troublesome and uneasy; it disturbs the peace and serenity of the mind, and fills the soul with storms and thun-

der. Did "ever any harden himself against God, and prosper?" And, indeed, how should he, when God has such a powerful and invisible executioner in his own bosom? Whoever rebels against the laws of his duty, and plainly affronts the dictates of his conscience, does that moment bid adieu to all true repose and quiet, and expose himself to the severe resentments of a self-tormenting mind. And though, by secret arts of wickedness, he may be able possibly to drown and stifle the voice of it for a while, yet every little affliction or petty accident will be apt to awaken it into horror, and to let in terror like an armed man upon him. A torment infinitely beyond what the most ingenious tyrants could ever contrive. Nothing so effectually invades our ease as the reproaches of our own minds. The wrath of man may be endured; it is (as Chrysostom very elegantly styles it,) to be choked or strangled with an evil conscience, which oft reduces the man to such distresses, as to make him choose death rather than life. A sad instance of all which we have in this unhappy man; who being wearied with furious and melancholy reflections upon what was past, threw back the wages of iniquity in open court, and despatched himself by a violent death: vainly hoping to take sanctuary in the grave, and that he should meet with that ease in another world which he could not find in this. "He departed, and went and hanged himself, and falling down burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out:" leaving a memorable warning to all treacherous and ungrateful, to all greedy and covetous persons, not to let the world insinuate itself too far into them; and indeed to all, "to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation." Our present state is slippery and insecure; "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." What privileges can be a sufficient fence, a foundation firm enough to rely upon, when the miracles, sermons, favors, and familiar converses of Christ himself could not secure one of the apostles from so fatal an apostasy!

3. A vacancy being thus made in the college of apostles; the first thing they did after their return from Mount Olivet, where our Lord took his leave of them, to St. John's house in Mount Sion, (the place, if we may believe Nicephorus, where the church met together,) was to fill up their number with a fit, proper person. To which purpose Peter acquainted them, that Judas, according to the prophetic prediction, being fallen from his ministry, it was necessary that another should be substituted in his room; one that had been a constant companion and disciple of the holy Jesus, and consequently capable of bearing witness to his life, death, and resurrection. Two were propounded in order to the choice, Joseph called Barsabas, and Justus, (whom some make the same with Joses, one of the brothers of our Lord,) and Matthias, both duly qualified for the place. The way of election was by lots, a way frequently used both among Jews and Gentiles for the determination of doubtful and difficult cases, and especially the choosing judges and magistrates; and this way was here taken (says one of the ancients) on purpose to comply with the old custom observed among the Jews; that in the election of an apostle, they might not seem to depart from the way that

had been used under the legal state. The pseudo Dionysius, author of the Ecclesiastic Hierachy, together with his two paraphrasts, expressly says, that it was not a lot that was used in this case, to determine the matter; but some immediate and extraordinary sign from heaven, falling upon the candidate, and discovering him to be the person chosen by God. But this is directly contrary to the very words of the sacred story, which say, that "they gave forth the lots, and that the lot fell upon Matthias." And this course the apostles the rather took, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given, by whose immediate dictates and inspirations they were chiefly guided afterwards. And that the business might proceed with the greater regularity and success, they first solemnly make their address to heaven, that the omniscient Being that governed the world, and perfectly understood the tempers and dispositions of men, would immediately guide and direct the choice, and show which of these two he would appoint to take that part of the apostolic charge, from which Judas was so lately fallen. The lots being put into the urn, Matthias's name was drawn out, and thereby the apostolate devolved upon him.

4. Not long after, the promised powers of the Holy Ghost were conferred upon the apostles, to fit them for that great and difficult employment, upon which they were sent; and among the rest St. Matthias betook himself to his charge and province. The first-fruits of his ministry he spent in Judæa, where having reaped a considerable harvest, he betook himself to other provinces. An author, I confess of no great credit in these matters, tells us, that he preached the gospel in Macedonia, where the Gentiles, to make an experiment of his faith and integrity, gave him a poisonous and intoxicating potion, which he cheerfully drank off, in the name of Christ, without the least prejudice to himself; and that when the same potion had deprived above two hundred and fifty of their sight, he laying his hands upon them, restored them to their sight; with a great deal more of the same stamp, which I have neither faith enough to believe, nor leisure to relate. The Greeks, with more probability, report him to have travelled eastward; he came (says Nicephorus) into the first, (says Sophronius) into the second Æthiopia; and in both, I believe, it is a mistake, either of the authors or transcribers, for Cappadocia; his residence being principally near the eruption of the river Apsarus, and the haven Hyssus, both places in Cappadocia. Nor is there any Æthiopia nearer those places than that continuous to Chaldæa, whereof before. And as for those that tell us, that he might well enough preach both in the Asian and African Æthiopia; and that both might be comprehended under that general name, as the eastern and western parts of the world were heretofore contained under the general title of the Indies; it is a fancy without any other ground to stand on than their own bare conjecture. The place whither he came was very barbarous, and his usage was accordingly. For here meeting with a people of a fierce and untractable temper, he was treated by them with great rudeness and inhumanity, from whom, after all his labors and sufferings, and a numerous conversion of men to Christianity, he obtained at last the crown of

martyrdom, ann. Chr. 61; or as others, 64. Little certainty can be retrieved concerning the manner of his death. Dorotheus will have him to die at Sebastople, and to be buried there, near the Temple of the Sun. An ancient Martyrology reports him to have been seized by the Jews, and as a blasphemer to have been stoned, and then beheaded. But the Greek offices, seconded herein by several ancient breviaries, tell us that he was crucified; and that as Judas was hanged upon a tree, so Matthias suffered upon a cross. His body is said to have been kept a long time at Jerusalem, thence thought to have been translated by Helen, the mother of the great Constantine, to Rome, where some parts of it are shown with great veneration at this day. Though others, with as great eagerness, and probably as much truth, contend that his relics were brought to, and are still preserved at Triers in Germany, a controversy wherein I shall not concern myself. His memory is celebrated in the Greek church, August 9, as appears not only from their menologies, but from a novel constitution of Manuel Comnenus, appointing what holy days should be kept in the church; while the western churches kept February 24, sacred to his memory. Among many other apocryphal writings attributed to the apostles, there was a gospel published under his name, mentioned by Eusebius and the ancients, and condemned with the rest by Gelasius, bishop of Rome, as it had been rejected by others before him. Under his name also there were extant traditions, cited by Clemens of Alexandria, from whence, no question, it was that the Nicolaitans borrowed that saying of his, which they abused to vile and beastly purposes; as under the pretended patronage of his name and doctrines, the Marcionites and Valentinians defended some of their most absurd and impious opinions.*

ST. MARK

THE EVANGELIST.

ST. MARK, though carrying something of Roman in his name, probably assumed by him upon some great change or accident of his life, or, which was not unusual among the Jews, when visiting the European provinces of the Roman empire, taken up at his going for Italy and Rome, was doubtless

* There are many circumstances respecting St. Matthias which the Christian inquirer naturally regards with considerable interest. The holiness of a man chosen to fill up the number in the company of the peculiarly elected apostles must have been great and singular; while the manner in which he was elected and consecrated, affords, in the first place, a valuable instance of the mode in which these founders of the Christian church proceeded in the earliest exercise of their episcopal functions, if we may so speak; and in the next, an instance of divine interference well worthy of attention, and of comparison with the anointing of St. Paul to the apostolic office by the Redeemer; now exercising on his throne in heaven the same care for the propagating of his religion, as he did while visible on earth.—Ed.

born of Jewish parents, originally descended of the tribe of Levi, and the line of the priesthood, and (if Nicephorus says true,) sister's son to Peter, though by others, against all reason, confounded with John, surnamed Mark, the son of Mary and Mark, sister's son to Barnabas. By the ancients he is generally thought to have been one of the seventy disciples; and Epiphanius expressly tells us, that he was one of those who taking exception at our Lord's discourse of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood, went back and walked no more with him;" but was seasonably reduced and reclaimed by Peter. But no foundation appears either for the one or for the other; nay, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, who lived near those times, positively affirms that he was no hearer nor follower of our Saviour. He was converted by some of the apostles, and probably by St. Peter, who is said to have been his undertaker at his baptism, (if I understand Isidore aright,) for no other reason I suppose, but because he calls him his son. Indeed he was his constant attendant in his travels, supplying the place of an amanuensis and interpreter; for though the apostles were divinely inspired, and among other miraculous powers had the gift of languages conferred upon them, yet was the "interpretation of tongues" a gift more peculiar to some than others. This might probably be St. Mark's talent in expounding St. Peter's discourses, whether by word or writing, to those who understood not the language wherein they were delivered. He accompanied him in his apostolical progress, preached the gospel in Italy and at Rome, where, at the request of the Christians of those parts, he composed and wrote his gospel.

2. By Peter he was sent into Egypt to plant Christianity in those parts, fixing his main residence at Alexandria, and the places thereabouts; where so great (says Eusebius) was the success of his ministry, that he converted multitudes both of men and women, not only to the embracing of the Christian religion, but to a more than ordinary strict profession of it, insomuch that Philo wrote a book of their peculiar rites and way of life; the only reason why St. Jerome reckons him among the writers of the church. Indeed Philo the Jew wrote a book, extant at this day, wherein he speaks of a sort of persons called *θεραπευται*, who in many parts of the world, but especially in a pleasant place near the Mareotick lake in Egypt, had formed themselves into religious societies; and gives a large account of their rites, customs, and strict, philosophical, and contemplative course of life. He tells us of them, that when they first enter upon this way, they renounce all secular interests and employments, and leaving their estates to their relations, retire into groves and gardens, and places devoted to solitude and contemplation; that they had their houses or colleges, not contiguous, that so being free from noise and tumult, they might the better minister to the designs of a contemplative life; nor yet removed at too great a distance, that they might maintain mutual society, and be conveniently capable of helping and assisting one another. In each of these houses there was an oratory, called *σημειον* and *μυστηριον*, wherein they discharged the more secret and solemn rites of their religion; divided in the middle with a parti-

tion-wall three or four cubits high, the one apartment being for the men, and the other for the women: here they publicly met every seventh day, where being set according to their seniority, and having composed themselves with great decency and reverence, the most aged person among them, and best skilled in the dogmata and principles of their institution, came forth into the midst, gravely and soberly discoursing what might make the deepest impression upon their minds; the rest attending with a profound silence, and only testifying their assent with the motion of their eyes or head. Their discourses were usually mystical and allegorical, seeking hidden senses under plain words; and of such an allegorical philosophy consisted the books of their religion, left them by their ancestors: the law they compared to an animal, the letter of it resembling the body, while the soul of it lay in those abstruse and recondite notions which the external veil and surface of the words concealed from vulgar understanding. He tells us also that they took very little care of the body, perfecting their minds by precepts of wisdom and religion; the day they entirely spent in pious and divine meditation, in reading and expounding the law and the prophets, and the holy volumes of the ancient founders of their sect, and in singing hymns to the honor of their Maker; absolutely temperate and abstemious, neither eating nor drinking till night, the only time they thought fit to refresh and regard the body; some of them out of an insatiable desire of growing in knowledge and virtue, fasting many days together. What diet they had was very plain and simple, sufficient only to provide against hunger and thirst; a little bread, salt, and water being their constant bill of fare: their clothes were as mean as their food, designed only as a present security against cold and nakedness. And this not only the case of men, but of pious and devout women, that lived (though separately) among them; that they religiously observed every seventh day, and especially the preparatory week to the great solemnity, which they kept with all expressions of a more severe abstinence and devotion. This and much more he has in that tract concerning them.

3. These excellent persons Eusebius peremptorily affirms to have been Christians, converted and brought under these admirable rules and institutions of life by St. Mark, at his coming hither, accommodating all passages to the manners and discipline of Christians; followed herein by Epiphanius, Jerome, and others of old, as by Baronius, and some others of later time: and this so far taken for granted, that many have hence fetched the rise of monasteries and religious orders among Christians. But whoever seriously and impartially considers Philo's account, will plainly find that he intends it of Jews and professors of the Mosaic religion, though whether Essenes, or of some other particular sect among them, I stand not to determine. That they were not Christians, is evident, besides that Philo gives not the least intimation of it, partly because it is improbable that Philo, being a Jew, should give so great a character and commendation of Christians, so hateful to the Jews at that time in all places of the world; partly in that

Philo's account do no way suit with the state and manners of Christians at that time; as that they withdrew themselves from public converse, and all affairs of civil life, which Christians never did, but when forced by violent persecutions; for ordinarily, as Justin Martyr, and Tertullian tell us, they promiscuously dwelt in towns and cities, ploughed their lands and followed their trades, eat and drank, and were clothed and habited like other men. So when he says, that besides the books of Moses and the prophets, they had the writings of the ancient authors of their sect and institution, this cannot be meant of Christians: for though Eusebius would understand it of the writings of the evangelists and apostles, yet besides that there were few of them published when Philo wrote this discourse, they were moreover of too late an edition to come under the character of ancient authors. Not to say, that some of their rites and customs were such, as the Christians of those days were mere strangers to, not taken up by the Christian church till many years, and some of them not till some ages after. Nay some of them never used by any of the primitive Christians; such were their "religious dances" which they had at their festival solemnities, especially that great one which they held at the end of every seven weeks; when their entertainment being ended, they all rose up, the men in one company, the women in another, dancing with various measures and motions, each company singing divine hymns and songs, and having a præcentor going before them, now one singing, and anon another, till in the conclusion they joined in one common chorus, in imitation of the triumphant song sung by Moses and the Israelites after their deliverance at the Red Sea. To all which let me add, what a learned man has observed, that the Essenes (if Philo means them) were great physicians, (thence probably called *Θεραπευται*, "healers;" though Philo, who is apt to turn all things into allegory, refers it only to their curing "the souls of men infected and over-run with difficult and desperate distempers, created by pleasures and extravagant appetites, and a long train of other lusts and passions.") Josephus reporting of them that they accurately study the writings of the ancients, excerping thence whatever is conducive either to soul or body; and that for the curing of diseases, they diligently inquired into the virtues of roots and stones that were most proper to drive away distempers. An account no ways agreeing with the Christians of those times, who miraculously cured diseases without the arts of physic, or any other preparations, than calling the name of Christ over the afflicted person. Doubtless that which led Eusebius into the mistake, was the conformity that he observed between the Christian *Ἀσκηται*, in and before his time, who entered upon a more strict and severe course of life, and those Therapeutæ described by Philo, an ordinary fancy being able to draw a fair parallel between them, and so it was but removing them some ages higher, and imagining them to have been converted and founded by St. Mark, and the work was done. Indeed it is not to be doubted, but that persons educated

under these excellent rules and methods of life, were more than ordinarily prepared for the reception of Christianity, (between which and their principles and rules of life, there was so great an affinity and agreement,) which must needs render our evangelist's success great in those parts, and open the way for men to come flocking over to the faith.

4. St. Mark did not confine his preaching to Alexandria, and the oriental parts of Egypt, but removed westward to the parts of Libya, going through the countries of Marmarica, Pentapolis, and others thereabouts; where, though the people were both barbarous in their manners, and idolatrous in their worship, yet by his preaching and miracles he made way for the entertainment of the gospel; and left them not, till he had not only gained them to, but confirmed them in the profession of it. Returning to Alexandria he preached freely, and ordered and disposed the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for succession by constituting governors and pastors of it. But the restless enemy of the souls of men would not long suffer him to be quiet. It was the time of Easter, at which season the great solemnities of Serapis happened to be celebrated, when the minds of the people being excited to a passionate vindication of the honor of their idol, broke in upon St. Mark, then engaged in the solemn celebration of divine worship, and binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets and the most craggy places to the Bucelus, a precipice near the sea, and for that night thrust him into prison, where his soul was, by a divine vision, erected and encouraged under the ruins of his shattered body. Early the next morning the tragedy began again; dragging him about in the same manner, till his flesh being raked off, and his blood run out, his spirits failed, and he expired. But their malice died not with him; Metaphrastes adds, that they burnt his body, whose bones and ashes the Christians there decently entombed, near the place where he was wont to preach. His body, at least the remains of it, were afterwards, with great pomp, removed from Alexandria to Venice, where they are religiously honored, and he adopted as the tutelar saint and patron of that state, and one of the richest and stateliest churches erected to his memory that the church can boast of at this day. He suffered in the month Pharmuthi, on the 25th of April, though the certain year of his martyrdom is not precisely determined by the ancients. Kerstenius, out of the Arabic memoirs of his life, says it was in the fourteenth or last year of Claudius: St. Jerome places it in the eighth of Nero. But extravagantly wide is Dorotheus's computation, who makes him to suffer in the time of Trajan, with as much truth as Nicephorus, on the other hand, affirms him to have come into Egypt in the reign of Tiberius. If in so great variety of opinions I may interpose my conjecture, I should reckon him to have suffered about the end of Nero's reign: for supposing him to have come with St. Peter to Rome about the fifth or sixth year of Nero, he might thence be despatched to Alexandria, and spend the residue of his life, and of that emperor's reign, in planting Christianity in those parts of the world. Sure I am that Irenæus reports St. Mark to have outlived Peter and Paul,

and that after their decease he composed his gospel out of those things which he had heard Peter preach. But whatever becomes of that, it is evident that Irenæus supposed (whose supposition certainly was not founded upon mere fancy and conjecture) that St. Mark for some considerable time survived the martyrdom of those two great apostles. A passage that so troubled Christopherson, (one of those who in these latter ages first translated Eusebius into Latin,) because crossing the accounts of their writers in this matter, that he chose rather to expunge the word, decease, and substitute another of a quite different sense, expressly contrary to the faith of all ancient copies, and to the most ancient version of Irenæus itself. But to return. St. Mark, as to his person, was of a middle size and stature, his nose long, his eyebrows turning back, his eyes graceful and amiable, his head bald, his beard prolix and gray, his gait quick, the constitution of his body strong and healthful.

5. His gospel, the only book he left behind him, was, as before we observed, written at the entreaty of the converts at Rome, who not content to have heard Peter preach, pressed St. Mark, his disciple, that he would commit to writing an historical account of what he had delivered to them; which he performed with no less faithfulness than brevity, all which St. Peter perused, ratified with his authority, and commanded to be publicly read in their religious assemblies. And though, as we noted but now, Irenæus seems to intimate that it was written after St. Peter's death; yet all that can be inferred hence will be, what in itself is a matter of no great moment and importance, that the ancients were not agreed in assigning the exact time when the several gospels were published to the world. If we will give way to the conjectures of a learned man, the difficulty will soon cease: he tells us, that the *μετα τῶν ἐξοδῶν* in Irenæus, should be rendered not "after their death," but "after their departure," viz. from Rome. And though this be not the common usage of the word, yet might it have been admitted, had there been any authority of the ancients to prove that St. Peter was twice at Rome. Therefore, not relying upon this, he flies to an ancient copy, where the words are read *μετα τῶν ἐκδοσιν*, "after the publication" of St. Matthew's gospel, whereof Irenæus had spoken in the words before. But he should have done well to have named his ancient copy, no such having been hitherto mentioned by any other writer. And therefore, it leaves a suspicion that he had no better authority than the boldness of Christopherson, who, indeed, thrusts such a conjecture into the margin of his book, and accordingly so renders it in his translation, with what design we observed before. But to return. It was frequently styled St. Peter's gospel, not so much because dictated by him to St. Mark, as because he principally composed it out of that account which St. Peter usually delivered in his discourses to the people. Which probably is the reason of what Chrysostom observes, that in his style and manner of expression he delights to imitate St. Peter, representing much in a few words. Though he commonly reduces the story of our Saviour's acts into a narrower compass than St. Matthew, yet want there not passages which he

relates more largely than he. The last chapter of his gospel, at least part of it, was (as Jerome informs us) wanting in all ancient Greek copies, rejected upon pretence of some disagreement with the other gospels, though, as he there shows, they are fairly consistent with each other. His great impartiality in his relations appears from hence, that he is so far from concealing the shameful lapse and denial of Peter, his dear tutor and master, that he sets it down with some particular circumstances and aggravations, which the other evangelists take no notice of. Some dispute has been made in what language it was written, whether in Greek or Latin: that which seems to give most countenance to the Latin original, is the note that we find at the end of the Synac version of this gospel, where it is said that Mark preached and declared his holy gospel at Rome, in the Roman, or the Latin tongue. An evidence that with me would almost carry the force of a demonstration, were I assured that this note is of equal value and authority with that ancient version, generally supposed to come very few centuries short of the apostolic age. But we know how usual it is for such additions to be made by some later hand; and what credit is to be given to the subscriptions at the end of St. Paul's epistles, we have showed elsewhere. Besides, that it is not here said that he wrote, but that he preached his gospel at Rome in that language. The advocates of the Romish church plead, that it is very congruous and suitable, that it should at first be consigned to writing in that language, being principally designed for the use of the Christians at Rome. An objection that will easily vanish, when we consider that as the convert Jews there understood very little Latin, so there were very few Romans that understood not Greek, it being (as appears from the writers of that age) the genteel and fashionable language of those times. Nor can any good reason be assigned, why it should be more inconvenient for St. Mark to write his gospel in Greek for the use of the Romans, than that St. Paul should, in the same language, write his epistle to that church. The original Greek copy, written with St. Mark's own hand, is said to be extant at Venice at this day; written (as they tell us) by him at Aquileia, and thence, after many hundreds of years, translated to Venice, where it is still preserved, though the letters so worn out with length of time, that they are not capable of being read. A story which as I cannot absolutely disprove, so I am not very forward to believe, and that for more reasons than I think worth while to insist on in this place.

ST. LUKE

THE EVANGELIST.

ST. LUKE was born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, a city celebrated for its extraordinary blessings and eminence, the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, the learning of its professors, the civility and politeness of its inhabi-

tants, by the pens of some of the greatest orators of their times: and yet, above all these, renowned for this one peculiar honor, that here it was that the disciples were first called Christians. It was an university, replenished with schools of learning, wherein were professors of all arts and sciences. So that being born in the very lap of the muses, he could not well miss of an ingenious and liberal education, his natural parts meeting with the advantages of great improvements. Nay, we are told, that he studied not only at Antioch, but in all the schools both of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became accomplished in all parts of learning and human sciences. Being thus furnished out with skill in all the preparatory institutions of philosophy, he more particularly applied himself to the study of physic, for which the Grecian academies were most famous; though they that hence infer the quality of his birth and fortunes, forget to consider, that this noble art was in those times generally managed by persons of no better rank than servants: upon which account a learned man conceives St. Luke, though a Syrian by birth, to have been a servant at Rome, where he sometimes practised physic; and whence being manumitted, he returned into his own country, and probably continued his profession all his life; it being so fairly consistent with, and in many cases so subservient to the ministry of the gospel, and the care of souls. Besides his abilities in physic, he is said to have been very skilful in painting, and there are no less than three or four several pieces still in being, pretended to have been drawn with his own hand; a tradition which Gretser the Jesuit sets himself with a great deal of pains, and to very little purpose, to defend; though his authors, either in respect of credit or antiquity, deserve very little esteem and value. Of more authority with me would be an ancient inscription found in a vault near the church of St. Mary, in Via Lata, at Rome, supposed to have been the place where St. Paul dwelt, wherein mention is made of a picture of the blessed virgin, *UNA EX VII. AB LUCA DEPICTIS*, "being one of the seven painted by St. Luke."

2. He was a Jewish proselyte; Antioch abounding with men of that nation, who had here their synagogues and schools of education; so that we need not, with Theophylact, send him to Jerusalem to be instructed in the study of the law. As for that opinion of Epiphanius and others, that he was one of the seventy disciples, one of those that deserted our Lord for the unwelcome discourse he made to them, but recalled afterward by St. Paul, I behold it as a story of the same coin and stamp with that of St. Mark's leaving Christ upon the same occasion, and being reduced by Peter, and that the one was made to answer the other; as upon no better ground it is said, that he was one of those two disciples that were going to Emmaus. For besides the silence of Scripture in the case, he himself plainly confesses, that he was not from the beginning an "eye-witness and minister of the word." Most probable it is, that he was converted by St. Paul during his abode at Antioch; when, as the apostles of catchers of fish were become fishers of men, so he of a physician of the body became a physician of the soul. This Nicephorus will have to have

been done at Thebes, the chief city of Bœotia, about forty miles from Athens, though it appears not to me by any credible author that ever St. Paul was there. He became ever after his inseparable companion and fellow-laborer in the ministry of the gospel, especially after his going into Macedonia; from which time, in recording the history of St. Paul's travels, he always speaks of himself in his own person.* He followed him in all his dangers, was with him at his several arraignments at Jerusalem, accompanied him in his desperate voyage to Rome, where he still attended on him to serve his necessities, and supply those ministerial offices which the apostle's confinement would not suffer him to undergo, and especially in carrying messages to those churches where he had planted Christianity. This infinitely endeared him to St. Paul, who owned him for his fellow-laborer, called him "the beloved physician," and "the brother whose praise is in the gospel, throughout all the churches;" which the ancients, and especially Ignatius, apply to our evangelists.

3. Probable it is that he did not wholly leave St. Paul till he had finished his course, and crowned all with martyrdom; though there are that tell us, that he left St. Paul at Rome, and returned back into the east, travelled into Egypt and the parts of Libya, preached the gospel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, constituted guides and ministers of religion, yea, that he himself took upon him the episcopal charge of the city of Thebais. Epiphanius gives upon this account, that he first preached in Dalmatia, and Galatia (he reads it *in τη Γαλλία*, in Gaul, or France, and peremptorily affirms, that they are all mistaken that say it was Galatia where Cresens preached, though some think that himself in the mean while is under the most confident mistake,) then in Italy and Macedonia; where he spared no pains, declined no dangers, that he might faithfully discharge the trust committed to him. The ancients are not very well agreed, either about the time or manner of his death; some affirming him to die in Egypt, others in Greece, the Roman martyrology, in Bithynia, Dorotheus, at Ephesus; some make him die a natural, others a violent death. Indeed neither Eusebius nor St. Jerome take any notice of it; but Nazianzen, Paulinus, bishop of Nola, and several others, expressly assert his martyrdom; whereof Nicephorus give this particular account, that coming into Greece he successfully preached, and baptized many converts into the Christian faith, till a party of infidels, making head against him, drew him to execution; and in want of a cross whereon to despatch him presently, hanged him upon an olive-tree, in the eightieth (the eighty-fourth says St. Jerome) year of his age. Kirstenius, from an ancient Arabic writer, makes him to have suffered martyrdom at Rome, which he thinks might probably be after St. Paul's first imprisonment there, and departure thence; when St. Luke being left behind as his deputy to supply his place, was shortly after put to death; the reason (says he) why he no longer continued his history of the apostles' acts, which surely he would have done, had he lived any

considerable time after St. Paul's departure. His body afterwards, by the command of Constantine, or his son Constantius, was solemnly removed to Constantinople, and buried in the great church built to the memory of the apostles.

4. Two books he wrote for the use of the church, his gospel, and the history of the apostles' acts, both dedicated to Theophilus, which many of the ancients suppose to be but a feigned name, denoting no more than a lover of God, a title common to every Christian; while others with better reason conclude it the proper name of a particular person, especially since the style of most excellent is attributed to him, the usual title and form of address in those times to princes and great men. Theophylact styles him "a man of consular dignity, and probably a prince;" the author of the Recognitions makes him a nobleman of Antioch, converted by St. Peter, and who, upon his conversion, gave his house to the church for the place of their public and solemn meetings. We may probably suppose him to have been some magistrate, whom St. Luke had converted and baptized, to whom he now dedicated these books, not only as a testimony of honorable respect, but as a means of giving him further certainty and assurance of those things wherein he had been instructed by him. For his gospel, St. Jerome supposes it to have been written in Achaia, during his travels with St. Paul in those parts, whose help he is generally said to have made use of in the composing of it, and that this the apostle primarily intends when he so often speaks of his gospel. But whatever assistance St. Paul might contribute towards it, we are sure the evangelist himself tells us, that he derived his intelligence in these matters from those, "who from the beginning had been eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." Nor does it in the least detract from the authority of his relations, that he himself was not present at the doing of them; for if we consider who they were from whom he derived his accounts of things, *habuit utique authenticam paraturam*, as Tertullian speaks, he had a stock both of credit and intelligence sufficiently authentic to proceed upon, delivering nothing in his whole history but what he had immediately received from persons present at, and concerned in the things which he has left upon record. The occasion of his writing it is thought to have been partly to prevent those false and fabulous relations which even then began to be obtruded upon the world, partly to supply what seemed wanting in those two evangelists that wrote before him, and the additions or larger explications of things are particularly enumerated by Irenæus. He mainly insists upon what relates to Christ's priestly office, and though recording other parts of the evangelical story, yet it ever is with a peculiar respect to his priesthood. Upon which account the ancients in accommodating the four symbolical representations in the prophet's vision to the four evangelists, assigned the ox or calf to St. Luke.

5. His history of the apostolical acts was written no doubt at Rome, at the end of St. Paul's two years' imprisonment there, with which he concludes his story; it contains the actions, and sometimes the sufferings of some principal apostles, especially St. Paul; for, besides that his ac-

* Acts xvi. 10.

tivity in the cause of Christ made him bear a greater part both in doing and suffering. St. Luke was his constant attendant, an eye-witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, and therefore capable of giving a more full and satisfactory account and relation of them; seeing no evidence or testimony in matters of fact can be more rational and convictive, than his who reports nothing but what he has heard and seen. Among other things, he gives us a particular account of those great miracles which the apostles did for the confirmation of their doctrine. And this (as St. Chrysostom informs us) was the reason why, in the primitive times, the book of the Acts, though containing those actions of the apostles that were done after Pentecost, was yet usually read in the church before it, in the space between that and Easter, when, as at all other times, those parts of the gospel were read which were proper to the season; it was (says he) because the apostles' miracles being the grand confirmation of the truth of Christ's resurrection, and those miracles recorded in that book; it was therefore thought most proper to be read next to the feast of the resurrection. In both these books his way and manner of writing

is exact and accurate: his style polite and elegant, sublime and lofty, and yet clear and perspicuous, flowing with an easy and natural grace and sweetness, admirably accommodate to an historical design, all along expressing himself in a vein of purer Greek, than is to be found in the other writers of the holy story. Indeed being born and bred at Antioch, (than which no place more famous for oratory and eloquence,) he could not but carry away a great share of the native genius of that place, though his style is sometimes alloyed with a touch of the Syriac and Hebrew dialect. It was observed of old, (as Jerome tells us,) that his skill was greater in Greek than Hebrew, that therefore he always makes use of the Septuagint translation, and refuses sometimes to render words, when the propriety of the Greek tongue will not bear it. In short, as an historian, he was faithful in his relations, elegant in his writings; as a minister, careful and diligent for the good of souls; as a Christian, devout and pious: and he crowned all the rest with the laying down of his life for the testimony of that gospel, which he had both preached and published to the world.

THE APOSTLES AND THEIR SUCCESSORS.

A N T I O C H.

THIS I place first, partly because it is generally acknowledged, even by the Romish writers, that a church was founded here by St. Peter some considerable time before that at Rome; partly because here it was that the venerable name of Christians did first commence. In which respect the fathers, in the council at Constantinople under Nectarius, in their synodicon to them at Rome, style the church of Antioch "The most ancient, and truly apostolical;" and St. Chrysostom, "the head of the whole world." The succession of its bishops, till the time of Constantine, (which shall be the boundary of this catalogue,) was as followeth.

I. St. Peter the apostle; who governed this church at least seven years. Nicephorus of Constantinople says eleven years.

II. Evodius, who sat twenty-three years. In his time the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.

III. Ignatius. After near forty years' presidency over this church, he was carried out of Syria to Rome, and there thrown to wild beasts in the theatre, ann. Chr. 110; Trajan, 11.

IV. Heron; he was bishop twenty years. To him succeeded

V. Cornelius, who kept the place thirteen years, dying ann. Chr. 142.

VI. Eros, twenty-six; or, as Eusebius, twenty-four years.

VII. Theophilus, thirteen years; a man of great parts and learning; many of his works were extant in Eusebius's time, and some of them we still have at this day.

VIII. Maximinus, thirteen years; he dying, the next that was chosen was

IX. Serapio, twenty-five years: many of his works are mentioned by Eusebius and St. Jerome. To him succeeded

X. Asclepiades, a man of great worth and eminency, and invincible constancy in the time of persecution: he continued in this see nine years.

XI. Philetus, eight years.

XII. Zebinus or Zebennus; he sat six years.

XIII. Babylas, thirteen years. After many conflicts and sufferings for the faith, he received the crown of martyrdom under Decius, and commanded his chains to be buried with him.

XIV. Fabius, or as the patriarch Nicephorus calls him, Flavius, possessed the chair nine years. He was a little inclining towards Novatianism.

XV. Demetrianus: he sat bishop, says Nicephorus, four: says Eusebius, eight years.

XVI. Paulus Samosatenus sat in the chair

eight years; when for his unepiscopal manners and practices; his unsound dogmata and principles, and especially his mean and unworthy opinions concerning our Saviour; he was condemned and deposed by a synod at Antioch, whose synodical determination is at large extant in Eusebius.

XVII. Domnus succeeded in the place of the deposed. He was son to Demetrian, Paulus's predecessor in that see; constituted and ordained to the place by the fathers of that synod, who further gave him this honorable character, that he was a man endued with all episcopal virtues and ornaments. Eusebius makes him to have sat six, Nicephorus, but two years.

XVIII. Timeus; he sat in the chair ten years.

XIX. Cyrillus, who presided over that church in the account of Nicephorus fifteen, of Eusebius, twenty-four years.

XX. Tyrannus; he sat thirteen years. In his time began the tenth persecution under Diocletian, which raged with great severity.

XXI. Vitalis, six years.

XXII. Philogonius, five years; succeeded by

XXIII. Paulinus, or as Nicephorus calls him, Paulus; who after five years was deposed and driven out by the prevalency of the Arian faction.

XXIV. Eustathius, formerly bishop of Berœa; a learned man, and of great note and eminency in the council of Nice; the first general council summoned by the great Constantine, after he had restored peace and prosperity to the church.

R O M E.

THE foundation of this church is, with just probabilities of reason, by many of the fathers equally attributed to Peter and Paul; the one, as apostle of the circumcision, preaching to the Jews, while the other, probably as the apostle of the uncircumcision, preached to the Gentiles. Its bishops succeeded in this order:

I. St. Peter and St. Paul, who both suffered martyrdom under Nero.

II. Linus, the son of Herculanus, a Tuscan; he is mentioned by St. Paul; he sat between eleven and twelve years.

III. Cletus, or Anacletus, or Anenclerus, supposed by many to be the same person; (though others, who reckon Anacletus a Greek, born at Athens, make them distinct, whom yet we have left out, not being mentioned by Eusebius;) a Roman, the son of Æmilianus, sat nine, though others say but two years.

IV. Clemens, a Roman, born in Mount Cælis, the son of Faustinus, near akin, say some, to the emperor: he was condemned to dig in the marble quarries near the Euxine sea; and by the command of Trajan, with an anchor about his neck thrown into the sea. He was bishop of Rome nine years and four months.

V. Euaristus, by birth a Greek; but his father a Jew of Bethlehem. He is said to have been crowned with martyrdom the last year of Trajan, in the ninth of his bishopric; or as others, the thirteenth.

VI. Alexander, a Roman, though young in

years, was grave in his manners and conversation. He sat ten years and seven months, and died a martyr.

VII. Xystus, or Sixtus, a Roman; he was martyred in the tenth year of his bishopric, and buried in the Vatican.

VIII. Telesphorus, a Greek, succeeded; Justin the martyr flourished in his time. He died a martyr, having sat eleven years and three months; ten years eight months say others; and lies buried near St. Peter, in the Vatican.

IX. Hyginus, the son of an Athenian philosopher, was advanced to the chair under Antonius Pius: he sat four years; Eusebius says eight.

X. Pius, an Italian, born at Aquileia; he died, having been bishop eleven years and four months; according to Eusebius, fifteen years.

XI. Anicetus, born in Syria; he is said, after nine, or as others, eleven years, to have suffered martyrdom; and was buried in the Via Appia, in the cemetery of Callistus. In his time Polycarp came to Rome.

XII. Soter, or as Nicephorus calls him, Soterichus, was a Campanian, the son of Concordius. There was an intercourse of letters between him and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth. He died after he had sat nine, or as Eusebius reckons, seven years.

XIII. Eleutherius, born at Nicopolis in Greece. To him Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter and an embassy. He sat fifteen years; died ann. Chr. 186; and lies buried in the Vatican.

XIV. Victor, an African, the son of Felix, a man of a furious and intemperate spirit, as appeared in his passionate proceedings in the controversy about the observation of Easter. He was bishop ten years: Onuphrius assigns him twelve years and one month.

XV. Zephyrinus, a Roman, succeeded, and possessed the chair eight, but as others, eighteen years; twenty, says Onuphrius. A pious and learned man, but a little warping towards the errors of Montanus.

XVI. Callistus, or Calixtus, the son of Domitius, a Roman; a prudent and modest man. He suffered much in the persecution under Alexander Severus, under whom he became a martyr, being thrown into a well by the procurement of Ulpian the great lawyer, but severe enemy of Christians. He sat six years, or five, as others, and one month; and though he made a cemetery, called after his own name, yet was he buried in that of Calepodius, in the Appian Way.

XVII. Urbanus, the son of Pontianus, a Roman: after four, or as some, six years, he suffered martyrdom for the faith: Eusebius has five; St. Jerome, in his translation, nine years. He was buried in Prætextatus's cemetery in the Appian Way.

XVIII. Pontianus, the son of Calphurnius, a Roman; for his bold reproving the Roman idolatry he was banished into the island Sardinia, where he died. He was bishop about three or four, or as Eusebius, five years.

XIX. Anteros, a Greek, the son of Romulus. He died by that he had kept his place one month; though others, without reason, make him to have lived in it many years, and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XX. Fabianus, a Roman ; he was unexpectedly chosen bishop, while several others being in competition, a pigeon suddenly decended, and sat upon his head, the great emblem of the Holy Spirit. He died a martyr after fourteen years ; buried in the same place with his predecessor.

XXI. Cornelius, a Roman ; he opposed and condemned Novatian : frequent letters passed between him and Cyprian. After somewhat more than two years he was first cruelly whipped, and then beheaded : buried in a vault within the grange of Lucina, near the Appian Way.

XXII. Lucius, a Roman, sat two, or as others, three years. He suffered martyrdom by the command of Valerian, and was buried in Callistus's cemetery.

XXIII. Stephanus, a Roman, the son of Julius. Great contests were between him and Cyprian, about rebaptizing those who had been baptized by heretics. He was beheaded after he had sat about two or three years, though others say seven, and buried with his predecessor.

XXIV. Xystus, a Greek, formerly a philosopher of Athens. After one, or as others compute, two years and ten months, he suffered martyrdom. Eusebius reckons it eight years.

XXV. Dionysius, of a monk made bishop, *λογιος τε και θανρασιος*, in the judgment of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, a truly learned and admirable person. The time of his presidency is uncertainly assigned—six, nine, ten, eleven years. Eusebius extends it to twelve years.

XXVI. Felix, a Roman. In his time arose the Manichæan heresy. He suffered about the fourth or fifth year of his episcopacy ; and lies buried in the Aurelian Way, in a cemetery of his own, two miles from Rome.

XXVII. Eutychianus, a Tuscan ; a man exceedingly careful of the burial of martyrs, after one year's space was himself crowned with martyrdom. Eusebius allows him but eight months ; Onuphrius, eight years and six months.

XXVIII. Caius, or as Eusebius calls him, Gai-anus, a Dalmatian, kinsman to the emperor Diocletian, and in the persecution under him became a martyr. He sat eleven years, some say longer ; Eusebius, fifteen years. He was beheaded, and buried in Callistus's cemetery.

XXIX. Marcellinus, a Roman. Through fear of torment he did sacrifice to the gods ; but recovering himself, died a martyr, after he had sat eight or nine years. He was beheaded, and buried in the cemetery of Priscilla, in the Salarian Way. To him succeeded

XXX. Marcellus, a Roman. He was condemned by Maxentius, the tyrant, to keep beasts in a stable, which yet he performed with his prayers and exercises of devotion. He died after five years and six months, and was buried in the cemetery of Priscilla.

XXXI. Eusebius, a Greek ; the son of a physician. He suffered much under the tyranny of Maxentius. He sat six years say some, four say others, though Eusebius allows him but seven months ; Onuphrius, one year and seven months. He was buried in the Appian Way, near Callistus's cemetery.

XXXII. Miltiades, an African. He might be a confessor under Maxentius ; but could not be a

martyr under Maximinus, as some report him. He sat three or four, though others assign him but two years ; and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XXXIII. Silvester, a Roman. He was elected into the place, anno. Chr. 314, fetched from the mountain Soracte, whither he had fled for fear of persecution. He was highly in favor with Constantine the Great. He sat twenty-three, Nicephorus says twenty-eight years.

JERUSALEM.

THE church of Jerusalem may, in some sense, be said to have been founded by our Lord himself, as it was for some time cultivated and improved by the ministry of the whole college of apostles. The bishops of it were as followeth.

I. St. James the Less, the brother of our Lord ; by him, say some, immediately constituted bishop ; but as others, more probably, by the apostles. He was thrown off the temple, and knocked on the head with a fuller's club.

II. Symeon, the son of Cleopas, brother to Joseph, our Lord's reputed father. He sat in this chair twenty-three years ; and suffered martyrdom in the reign of Trajan, in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age.

III. Justus succeeded in his room, and sat six years.

IV. Zacheus, or as Nicephorus the patriarch calls him, Zacharias, four years.

V. Tobias ; to him, after four years, succeeded

VI. Benjamin, who sat two years.

VII. John, who continued the same space.

VIII. Matthias or Mattheus, two years.

IX. Philippus, one year. Next came

X. Seneca, who sat four years.

XI. Justus, four years.

XII. Levi, or Lebes, two years.

XIII. Ephrem or Ephres ; or as Epiphanius styles him, Vaphres, two years.

XIV. Joseph, two years.

XV. Judas, two years. Most of these bishops we may observe to have but a short time, following one another with a very quick succession. This doubtless was in a great measure owing to the turbulent and unquiet humor of the Jewish nation, frequently rebelling against the Roman powers, whereby they provoked them to fall heavy upon them, and cut off all that came in their way, making no distinction between Jews and Christians ; as indeed they were all Jews, though differing in the rites of their religion. For hitherto the bishops of Jerusalem had successively been of the circumcision ; the church there having been entirely made up of Jewish converts. But Jerusalem being now utterly laid waste, and the Jews dispersed into all other countries, the Gentiles were admitted not only into the body of that church, but even into the episcopal chair. The first whereof was

XVI. Marcus, who sat eight years.

XVII. Cassianus, eight years.

XVIII. Publius, five years.

XIX. Maximus, four years.

XX. Julianus, two years.

XXI. Caius, three years.

XXII. Symmachus, two years.

XXIII. Caius, three years.

XXIV. Julianus, four years.

XXV. Elias, two years. I find not this bishop mentioned by Eusebius; but he is recorded by Nicephorus of Constantinople.

XXVI. Capito, four years.

XXVII. Maximus, four years.

XXVIII. Antoninus, five years.

XXIX. Valens, three years.

XXX. Dulichianus, two years.

XXXI. Narcissus, four years. He was a man of eminent piety, famous for the great miracles which he wrought; but not being able to bear the aspersions which some unjustly cast upon him, (though God signally and miraculously vindicated his innocency,) he left his church, and retired into deserts and solitudes. In his absence was chosen

XXXII. Dius, who sat eight years. After him

XXXIII. Germanio, four years.

XXXIV. Gordius, five years. In his time Narcissus, as one from the dead, returned from his solitudes, and was importuned by the people again to take the government of the church upon him: being highly revered by them, both for his strict and philosophical course of life, and the signal vengeance which God took of his accusers; and in this second administration he continued ten years, suffering martyrdom when he was near one hundred and twenty years old. To relieve the infirmities of his great age, they took in, to be his colleague

XXXV. Alexander, formerly bishop in Capadocia, who at that time had, out of devotion, taken a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; the choice being extraordinarily designed by a particular revelation from heaven. He was an eminent confessor; and after having sat fifteen years, died in prison, under the Decian persecution. By him Origen was ordained presbyter. He was a great patron of learning as well as religion; a studious preserver of the records of the church. He erected a library at Jerusalem, which he especially furnished with the writings and epistles of ecclesiastical persons; and out of this treasury it was that Eusebius borrowed a great part of his materials for the composing of his history.

XXXVI. Mazabanes, nine years.

XXXVII. Hymenæus, twenty-three years.

XXXVIII. Zabdas, ten years.

XXXIX. Hermon, nine years. He was, as Eusebius tells us, the last bishop of this see before that fatal persecution that raged even in his time.

XL. Macarius, ordained ann. Chr. 315. He was present in the great Nicene council. He sat, says Nicephorus of Constantinople, twenty years; but St. Jerome allows him a much longer time.

BYZANTIUM,

AFTERWARDS CALLED CONSTANTINOPLE.

THAT this church was first founded by St. Andrew, we have showed in his life. The succession of its bishops was as followeth.

I. St. Andrew the apostle. He was crucified at Patræ, in Achaia.

II. Stachys, whom St. Paul calls his beloved Stachys, ordained bishop by St. Andrew. He sat sixteen years.

III. Onesimus, fourteen years.

IV. Polycarpus, seventeen years.

V. Plutarchus, sixteen years.

VI. Sedecio, nine years.

VII. Diogenes, fifteen years. Of the last three no mention is made in Nicephorus of Constantinople; but they are delivered by Nicephorus Callistus, lib. viii. c. 6, p. 540.

VIII. Eleutherius, seven years.

IX. Felix, five years.

X. Polycarpus, seventeen years.

XI. Athenodorus, four years. He erected a church called Elea, afterwards much beautified and enlarged by Constantine the Great.

XII. Euzeius, sixteen years; though Nicephorus Callistus allows but six years.

XIII. Laurentius, eleven years and six months.

XIV. Alypius, thirteen years.

XV. Pertinax, a man of consular dignity. He built another church near the sea-side, which he called Peace. He sat nineteen years, which Nicephorus Callistus reduces to nine years.

XVI. Olympianus, eleven years.

XVII. Marcus, thirteen years.

XVIII. Cyriacus or Cyriliannus, sixteen years.

XIX. Constantinus, seven years. In the first year of his bishopric he built a church in the north part of the city, which he dedicated to the honor of Euphemia the martyr, who had suffered in that place. In this oratory he spent the remainder of his life, leaving his episcopal chair to

XX. Titus, who sat thirty-five years and six months; though Nicephorus Callistus makes it thirty-seven years. After him came

XXI. Dometius, brother (as they tell us) to the emperor Probus; he was bishop twenty-one years six months.

XXII. Probus succeeded his father Dometius, and sat twelve years; as after him

XXIII. Metrophanes, his brother, who governed that church ten years. And in his time it was that Constantine translated the imperial court hither, enlarged and adorned it, called it after his own name, and made it the seat of the empire.

XXIV. Alexander succeeded; a man of great piety and integrity, zealous and constant in maintaining the truth against the blasphemies of Arius. He sat twenty-three years.

ALEXANDRIA.

THE foundations of this church were laid, and a great part of its superstructure raised by St. Mark; who though not strictly and properly an apostle, yet being an apostle at large, and immediately commissioned by St. Peter, it justly obtained the honor of an apostolical church. Its bishops and governors are thus recorded:

I. St. Mark the evangelist, of whose travels and martyrdom we have spoken in his life. Nicephorus of Constantinople makes him sit two years.

II. Anianus, charactered by Eusebius, "A man beloved of God, and admirable in all things." He ruled in that throne twenty-two years.

III. Avilius, twelve years; or as Eusebius, thirteen years.

IV. Cardo, who succeeded about the first year of Trajan: he sat ten years; according to Eusebius, eleven years.

V. Primus, twelve years.

VI. Justus or Justinus, ten years.

VII. Eumenes, ten years; or as Eusebius, thirteen years: St. Jerome, in his translation, calls him Hymenæus.

VIII. Marcus or Marcianus, thirteen years; or as Eusebius, ten years.

IX. Celadion, ten years; but in Eusebius's computation, fourteen years.

X. Agrippinus, fourteen years; according to Eusebius, twelve years.

XI. Julianus, fifteen years; though Eusebius allows but ten years.

XII. Demetrius twenty-one years; but Eusebius more truly makes him to have governed that church no less than forty-three years. He was a man of great zeal and piety, and underwent many troubles in the persecution at Alexandria. He was at first a great friend to Origen, but afterwards became his enemy, laying some irregularities to his charge; partly out of emulation at the great reputation which Origen had gained in the world; partly in that Origen had suffered himself to be ordained presbyter by two other bishops, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus of Cæsarea.

XIII. Heraclas, a man of a philosophical genius and way of life. He was educated under the institution of Origen, and by him taken to be his assistant in the schools of his catechumens; the whole government whereof he afterwards resigned to him; and upon the death of Demetrius he was advanced to the government of that church; the care whereof he took for sixteen years; though Nicephorus of Constantinople, by a mistake, I

suppose, for his predecessor, makes it forty-three years.

XIV. Dionysius, seventeen years. He was one of the most eminent bishops of his time: he was one of Origen's scholars, then preferred first master of the catechetical school at Alexandria, and afterwards bishop of that see. In the persecution under Decius he was banished first to Taposiris, a little town between Alexandria and Canopus; then to Cephro, and other places in the deserts of Libya. But a large account of his own and other sufferings, with many other transactions of those times, we have out of his own letters, yet extant in Eusebius. He died in the twelfth year of the emperor Gallienus.

XV. Maximus. Of a presbyter he was made bishop of Alexandria. He sat in that chair eighteen years according to Eusebius's computation, though Nicephorus of Constantinople assigns but eight years.

XVI. Theonas, seventeen years; or, according to St. Jerome's version of Eusebius, nineteen years. To him succeeded,

XVII. Petrus, twelve years. He began his office three years before the last persecution. A man of infinite strictness and accuracy, and of indefatigable industry for the good of the church. He suffered in the ninth year of the persecution, with the loss of his head, gaining the crown of martyrdom: after whose death came in the prosperous and happy days of the church; Constantine the Great turning the black and dismal scene of things into a state of calmness and serenity.

XVIII. Achilles, nine years; though Nicephorus of Constantinople allows him but one year.—By him, Arius, upon his submission, was ordained presbyter.

XIX. Alexander, twenty-three years. Under him Arius began more openly to broach his heresy at Alexandria, who was thereupon excommunicated and thrust out by Alexander, and shortly after condemned by the Fathers of the council of Nice.

LIVES

OF

ST. CLEMENS, ST. IGNATIUS, AND ST. POLYCARP.

ST. CLEMENS.

[THE learned author of the "Lives of the Apostles" having completed his design in respect to the history of those chosen vessels of divine grace, found it expedient to enlarge his plan, and to write the memoirs of the other holy men who labored in the same remarkable season of heavenly dispensations. These later productions of his pen display the same erudition, the same good sense and candor as the "Lives of the Apostles;" and the most accomplished scholar in ecclesiastical history may view, with profound interest and respect, the admirable zeal which they exhibit in the cause of truth. We have selected from the "Apostolici," the memoirs of the three Fathers whose names are most familiar to the general reader. They were men on whom the Spirit of God rested in the power and glory of holiness; they show in their whole conduct, what manner of persons they ought to be who should sit in the seats of the apostles: and by this, their example, we learn, how convincing were the evidences of the gospel, when they might best be examined, to the purest and most elevated minds.]—ED.

IT makes not a little for the honor of this venerable apostolical man, (for of him all antiquity understands it,) that he was "fellow-laborer" with St. Paul, and one of those "whose names were written in the book of life." He was born at Rome, upon Mount Cœlius, as, besides others, the Pontifical, under the name of Damasus, informs us. His father's name was Faustinus, but who he was, and what his profession and course of life, is not recorded. Indeed, in the book of the Recognitions and the *τα ελημεντια* (mentioned by the ancients and lately published) we have more particular accounts concerning him; books which however falsely attributed to St. Clemens, and liable in some cases to just exception, yet being of great antiquity in the church, written not long after the apostolic age, (as we shall show hereafter,) we shall thence derive some few notices to our purpose, though we cannot absolutely engage for the certainty of them. There we find St. Clemens brought in, giving this account of himself.

2. He was descended of a noble race, sprung from the family of the Cæsars, his father Faustianias, or Faustus, being near akin to the emperor, (I suppose Tiberius,) and educated together with him, and by his procurement matched with

Mattidia, a woman of prime family in Rome. He was the youngest of three sons, his two elder brothers being Faustinus and Faustus, who after changed their names for Nicetas and Aquila. His mother, a woman it seems of exquisite beauty, was by her husband's own brother strongly solicited to unchaste embraces. To avoid whose troublesome importunities, and yet loth to reveal it to her husband, lest it should break out to the disturbance and dishonor of their family, she found out this expedient: she pretended to her husband that she was warned in a dream, together with her two eldest sons to depart for some time from Rome. He accordingly sent them to reside at Athens, for the greater conveniency of their education. But hearing nothing of them, though he sent messengers on purpose every year, he resolved at last to go himself in pursuit of them; which he did, leaving his youngest son, then twelve years of age, at home, under the care of tutors and guardians. St. Clemens grew up in all manly studies, and virtuous actions, till falling under some great dissatisfactions of mind concerning the immortality of the soul, and the state of the other life, he applied himself to search more narrowly into the nature and the truth of things. After having baffled all his own notions, he betook himself to the schools of the philosophers, where he met with nothing but fierce contentions, endless disputes, sophistical and uncertain arts of reasoning; thence he resolved to consult the Egyptian hierophantæ, and to see if he could meet with any who by arts of magic was able to fetch back one of those who were departed to the invisible world, the very sight of whom might satisfy his curious inquiries about this matter. While he was under this suspense, he heard of the Son of God's appearing in the world, and the excellent doctrine he had published in Judæa, wherein he was further instructed by the ministry of St. Barnabas, who came to Rome. Him he followed first to Alexandria, and thence, after a little time to Judæa. Arriving at Cæsarea he met St. Peter, by whom he was instructed and baptized, whose companion and disciple he continued for a great part of his life.

3. This is the sum of what I thought good to borrow from those ancient writings. As for his relations, what various misadventures his father and mother, and his two brothers severally met with, by what strange accidents they all afterwards met together, were converted and baptized into the Christian faith, I omit, partly as less proper to my purpose, partly because it looks more like a dramatic scene of fancy, than a true and real history. As to that part of the account of his being related to the imperial family, though it

be more than once and again confidently asserted by Nicephorus, (who transcribes a good part of the story,) and by others before him, yet I cannot but behold it as an evident mistake, arising from no other fountain than the story of Flavius Clemens, the consul, who was cousin-german to the emperor Domitian, and his wife Flavia Domitilla, near akin also to the emperor, concerning whose conversion to, and martyrdom for, the faith of Christ, we have elsewhere given an account from the writers of those times. Probable it is, that St. Clemens, for the main, attended St. Peter's motions, and came with him to Rome, where he had at last the government of that church committed to him. Dorotheus tells us, that he was the first of the Gentiles that embraced the Christian faith, and that he was first made bishop of Sardica, a city in Thrace, afterwards called Triaditza, and then of Rome. But herein I think he stands alone : I am sure he has none of the ancients to join with him ; unless he understands it of another Clemens, whom the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* also makes one of the seventy disciples, but withal seems to confound with ours. That he was bishop of Rome, there is an unanimous and unquestionable agreement of all ancient writers, though they strangely vary about the place and order of his coming to it. The writers of the Roman church, how great words soever they speak of the constant and uninterrupted succession of St. Peter's chair, are yet involved in an inextricable labyrinth about the succession of the four first bishops of that see, scarce two of them of any note bringing in the same account. I shall not attempt to accommodate the difference between the several schemes that are given in, but only propose what I conceive most likely and probable.

4. Evident it is both from Irenæus and Epiphanius, as also before them from Caius, an ancient writer, and from Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, that Peter and Paul jointly laid the foundations of the Church of Rome, and are thereby equally styled bishops of it ; the one as "apostle of the Gentiles," (as we may probably suppose,) taking care of the Gentile Christians, while the other as "the apostle of the circumcision," applied himself to the Jewish converts at Rome. For we cannot imagine, that there being such chonical and inveterate prejudices between the Jews and Gentiles, especially in matters of religion, they should be suddenly laid aside, and both enter together into one public society. We know that in the church of Jerusalem, till the destruction of the temple, none were admitted but Jewish converts : and so it might be at first at Rome, where infinite numbers of Jews then resided ; they might keep themselves for some time in distinct assemblies, the one under St. Paul, the other under Peter. And some foundation for such a conjecture there seems to be even in the apostolic history, where St. Luke tells us, that St. Paul, at his first coming to Rome, being rejected by the Jews, turned to the Gentiles, declaring to them the salvation of God, who gladly heard and entertained it ; and that he continued thus preaching the kingdom of God, and receiving all that came in unto him for two years together.* This I look upon as the first

settled foundation of a Gentile church at Rome ; the further care and presidency whereof St. Paul might devolve upon Linus, (whom the interpolated Ignatius makes his deacon or minister,) as St. Peter, having established a church of Jewish converts, might turn it over to St. Clemens ; of whom Tertullian expressly says that Peter ordained him bishop of Rome. Accordingly, the compiler of the Apostolic Constitutions, makes Linus to be ordained bishop of Rome by St. Paul, and Clemens, by St. Peter. He says, indeed, that Linus was the first ; and so he might very well be, seeing St. Paul (whatever the modern writers of that church say to the contrary) was some considerable time at Rome, before St. Peter came hither. Linus dying, was probably succeeded by Cletus or Anacletus (for the Greeks, and doubtless most truly, generally make him the same person) in his distinct capacity. At which time Clemens, whom St. Peter had ordained to be his successor, continued to act as president over the church of Jewish converts : and thus things remained till the death of Cletus, when the difference between Jew and Gentile being quite worn off, the entire presidency and government of the whole church of Rome might devolve upon St. Clemens, as the survivor ; and from this period of time, the years of his episcopacy, according to the common computation, are to begin their date. By this account, not only that of Optatus and the Bucherain catalogue may be true, which make Clemens to follow Linus ; but also that of Baronius and many of the ancients, who make both Linus and Cletus to go before him, as we can allow they did as bishops and pastors of the Gentile church. As for a more distinct and particular account of the times, I thus compute them :—Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom in the Neronian persecution, (as we have elsewhere probably showed,) ann. 65. After which Linus sat twelve years, four months, and twelve days : Cletus twelve years, one (but as Baronius, seven) months, and eleven days, which between them make twenty-five years, and extend to ann. Chr. 90 ; after which, if we add the nine years, eleven months, and twelve days, wherein Clemens sat sole bishop over that whole church, they fall in exactly with the third year of Trajan ; the time assigned for his martyrdom, by Eusebius, Jerome, Damasus, and many others. Or if, with Petavius, Ricciolus, and some others, we assign the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, ann. 67, two years later, the computation will still run more smooth and easy, and there will be time enough to be allowed for the odd months and days assigned by the different accounts, and to make the years of their pontificate complete and full. Nor can I think of any way, considering the great intricacy and perplexity of the thing, that can bid fairer for an easy solution of this matter. For granting Clemens to have been ordained by St. Peter for his successor, (as several of the ancients expressly affirm,) and yet withal (what is evident enough) that he died not till ann. Chr. 100, Traj. 3, it will be very difficult to find any way so proper to reconcile it. As for that fancy of Epiphanius, that Clemens might receive imposition of hands from Peter, but refused the actual exercise of the episcopal office, so long as Linus and Cletus

* Acts xxviii. 23—25, 23—31.

lived ; he only proposes it as a conjecture, founded merely upon a mistaken passage of Clemens, in his epistle to the Corinthians, and confesses it is a thing wherein he dare not be positive, not being confident whether it were so or no.

5. Might the ancient epistle written to St. James, brother of our Lord, under the name of our St. Clemens, be admitted as a competent evidence, there we find not only that Clemens was constituted bishop by St. Peter, but with what formality the whole affair was transacted. It tells us, that the apostle, sensible of his approaching dissolution, presented Clemens before the church as a fit person to be his successor ; the good man, with all imaginable modesty, declined the honor which St. Peter, in a long discourse, urged upon him, and set out at large the particular duties both of ministers in their respective orders and capacities, as also of the people ; which done, he laid his hands upon him, and compelled him to take his seat. How he administered this great but difficult province, the ecclesiastical records give us very little account. The author of the Pontifical, that fathers himself upon Pope Damasus, tells us, that he divided Rome into seven regions, in each of which he appointed a notary, who should diligently inquire after all the martyrs that suffered within his division, and faithfully recorded the acts of their martyrdom. I confess, the credit of this author is not good enough absolutely to rely upon his single testimony in matters so remote and distant ; though we are otherwise sufficiently assured, that the custom of notaries taking the speeches, acts, and sufferings of the martyrs did obtain in the early ages of the church. Besides this, we are told by others, that he despatched away several persons to preach and propagate the Christian religion in those countries whither the sound of the gospel had not yet arrived. Nor did he only concern himself to propagate Christianity where it wanted, but to preserve the peace of those churches where it was already planted. For an unhappy schism having broken out in the church of Corinth, they sent to Rome to inquire his advice and assistance in it ; who in the name of the church, whereof he was governor, wrote back an incomparable epistle to them, to compose and quell, *μὴσαν κ' ἀναστροφῆς στασις*, as he calls it, "that impious and abominable sedition" that was risen among them. And, indeed, there seems to have been a more intimate and friendly intercourse between these two churches in those times, than between any other mentioned in the writings of the church. The exact time of writing this epistle is not known, the date of it not being certainly determinable by any notices of antiquity, or any intimations in the epistle itself. The conjecture that has obtained with some of most note and learning is, that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, while the temple and the Levitical ministration were yet standing. Which they collect, I suppose, from a passage where he speaks of them in the present tense. But whoever impartially considers the place, will find no necessary foundation for such an inference, and that St. Clemens's design was only to illustrate his argument, and to show the reasonableness of observing those particular stations and ministries which God has appointed us, by alluding to the ordinances of the

Mosaic institution. To me it seems most probable to have been written a little after the persecution under Domitian, and probably not long before Clemens's exile. For excusing the no sooner answering the letters of the church of Corinth, he tells them it was by reason of those calamities and sad accidents that had happened to them. Now plain it is, that no persecution had been raised against the Christians, especially at Rome, from the time of Nero till Domitian. As for Mr. Young's conjecture from this place, that it was written in the time of his banishment ; he forgot to consider that the epistle was written not in Clemens's own name, but in the person of the church of Rome. A circumstance that renders the place incapable of being particularly applied to him.

6. By a firm patience and prudent care he weathered out the stormy and troublesome times of Domitian, and the short but peaceable reign of Nerva. When, alas ! "the clouds returned after rain," and began to thicken into a blacker storm in the time of Trajan, an excellent prince indeed, of so sweet and plausible a disposition, of so mild and inoffensive a conversation, that it was ever after a part of their solemn acclamation at the choice of a new elected emperor, *MELLOR TRAJANO*, "better than Trajan." But withal he was zealous for his religion, and upon that account a severe enemy to Christians. Among several laws enacted in the beginning of his reign, he published one (if Baronius, which I much question, conjecture the time aright ; for Pliny's epistle, upon which he seems to ground it, was probably written at least nine or ten years after,) whereby he forbad the Heterie, the societies or colleges erected up and down the Roman empire, whereat men were wont to meet, and liberally feast, under a pretence of more convenient despatch of business, and the maintenance of mutual love and friendship ; which yet the Roman state beheld with a jealous eye, as fit nurseries for treason and sedition. Under the notion of these unlawful combinations, the Christian assemblies were looked upon by their enemies ; for finding them confederated under one common president, and constantly meeting at their solemn love-feasts, and especially being of a way of worship different from the religion of the empire, they thought they might securely proceed against them as illegal societies, and contemners of the imperial constitution ; wherein St. Clemens, as head of the society at Rome, was sure to bear the deepest share. And indeed it was no more than what himself had long expected, as appears from his letter to the Corinthians ; where having spoken of the torments and sufferings which the holy apostles had undergone, he tells them, that he looked upon himself and his people as set to run the same race, and that the same fight and conflict was laid up for them.

7. Simeon the metaphrast, in the account of his martyrdom, (nearly the same with that life of St. Clement, said to be written by an uncertain author, published long since by Lazius, at the end of *Abdias Babylonius*,) sets down the beginning of his troubles to this effect. St. Clemens having converted Theodora, a noble lady, and afterwards her husband Sisinnius, a kinsman and favorite of the late emperor Nerva, the gaining so great a man

quickly drew on others of chief note and quality to embrace the faith. So prevalent is the example of religious greatness to sway men to piety and virtue; but envy naturally maligns the good of others, and hates the instrument that procures it. This good success derived upon him the particular odium of Torcutianus, a man of great power and authority at that time in Rome, who by the inferior magistrates of the city, excited the people to a mutiny against the holy man, charging him with magic and sorcery, and for being an enemy and blasphemer of the gods, crying out, either that he should do sacrifice to them, or expiate his impiety with his blood. Mamertinus, præfect of the city, a moderate and prudent man, being willing to appease the uproar, sent for St. Clemens, and mildly persuaded him to comply; but finding his resolution inflexible, he sent to acquaint the emperor with the case, who returned this short rescript, that he should either sacrifice to the gods, or be banished to Cherson, a disconsolate city beyond the Pontic Sea. Mamertinus having received the imperial mandate, unwillingly complied with it, and gave order that all things should be made ready for the voyage; and accordingly he was transported thither, to dig in the marble-quarries, and labor in the mines. *Damatio ad metella* is a punishment frequently mentioned in the Roman laws, where it is said to be *proxima morti pœna*, the very next to capital punishments. Indeed the usage under it was very extreme and rigorous: for besides the severest labor and most intolerable hardship, the condemned person was treated with all the instances of inhumanity, whipped and beaten, chained and fettered, deprived of his estate, which was forfeited to the exchequer, and himself perpetually degraded into the condition of a slave, and consequently rendered incapable to make a will. And not this only, but they were further exposed to the most public marks of infamy and dishonor, their heads half shaved, their right eye bored out, their left leg disabled, their foreheads branded with an infamous mark, a piece of disgrace first used in this case by Caligula, (and the historian notes it as an instance of his cruel temper,) and from him continued till the times of Constantine, who abolished it by a law, ann. Ch. 315, not to mention the hunger and thirst, the cold and nakedness, the filth and nastiness, which they were forced to conflict with in those miserable places.

8. Arriving at the place of his uncomfortable exile, he found vast numbers of Christians, condemned to the same miserable fate, whose minds were not a little erected under all their pressures, at the sight of so good a man; by whose constant preaching, and the frequent miracles that he wrought, their enemies were converted into a better opinion of them and their religion; the inhabitants of those countries daily flocking over to the faith, so that in a little time Christianity had beaten paganism out of the field, and all monuments of idolatry thereabouts were defaced and overturned. The fame whereof was quickly carried to the emperor, who despatched Aufidianus, the president, to put a stop to this growing sect; which by methods of terror and cruelty he set upon, putting great numbers of them to death. But finding how readily and resolutely they pressed up to exe-

cution, and that this day's martyrs did but prepare others for to-morrow's torments, he gave over contending with the multitude, and resolved to single out one of note above the rest, whose exemplary punishment might strike dread and terror into the rest. To this purpose St. Clemens is pitched on, and all temptations being in vain tried upon him, the executioners are commanded to carry him aboard, and throw him into the bottom of the sea, where the Christians might despair to find him. This kind of death, was called *καταποντισμος*, and was in use not only among the Greeks, as appears by the instance mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, but the Romans, as we find in several malefactors condemned to be thrown into the sea, both by Tiberius and Avidius Cassius. To this our Lord has respect, when in the case of wilful scandal, he pronounces it better for the man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the bottom of the sea. Where, though St. Jerome tells us that this punishment was usual among the ancient Jews, in case of more enormous crimes, yet do I not remember that any such capital punishment ever prevailed among them. I shall not here relate what I find concerning the strange and miraculous discovery of St. Clemens's body, nor the particular miracle of a little child preserved in the church erected to him in the middle of the sea, for a whole year together, (though solemnly averred by Ephræm, bishop of the place,) as despairing they would ever find a belief wide enough to swallow them, nor those infinite other miracles said to be done there: it shall only suffice to mention one; that upon the anniversary solemnity of his martyrdom the sea retreats on each side into heaps, and leaves a fair and dry passage for three miles together, to the martyr's tomb, erected within a church, built (as it must be supposed, by angels) within the sea; and the people's devotions being ended, the sea returns to its own place; *τιμωντος το θεον, και ταυτα τον μαρτυρα*, says one of my authors, God by this means doing honor to the martyr. I only add, that these traditions were current before the time of Gregory, bishop of Tours, who speaks of them with great reverence and devotion. St. Clemens died, (as both Eusebius and St. Jerome witness, for I heed not the account of the Alexandrin Chronicon, which places it four years after the seventh of Trajan, though the consuls, which he there assigns, properly belong to the fourth of that emperor,) in the third year of Trajan, a little more than two years after his banishment, after he had been sole bishop of Rome nine years, six months, and so many days, say Baronius and others, though Bucherius's catalogue, more to be trusted, (as being composed before the death of Pope Liberius, ann. 354,) nine years, eleven months, and twelve days. His martyrdom happened on the 24th of November, according to Baronius and the ordinary Roman computation, but on the ninth of that month, says the little martyrology published by Bucherius, and which unquestionably was one of the true and genuine calendars of the ancient church. He was honored at Rome by a church erected to his memory, yet standing in St. Jerome's time.

9. The writings which at this day bear the name of this apostolic man, are of two sorts, genuine or supposititious. In the first class is that famous

epistle to the Corinthians, so much magnified by the ancients, *ικανωτατη γραφη* as Irenæus calls it, the most excellent and absolute writing, *μεγαλη τε κ θαυμασια*, says Eusebius, a truly great and admirable epistle, and very useful as St Jerome adds, *αξιολογος*, as Photius styles it, worthy of all esteem and veneration, *ανωμολογημενη παρα πασι*, as Eusebius assures us, received by all, and indeed revered by them next to the Holy Scriptures, and therefore, publicly read in their churches for some ages, even till his time, and it may be a long time after. The style of it, as Photius truly observes, is very plain and simple, imitating an ecclesiastical and unaffected way of writing, and which breathes the true genius and spirit of the apostolic age. It was written upon occasion of a great schism and sedition in the church of Corinth, begun by two or three factious persons against the governors of the church, who envying either the gifts, or the authority and esteem of their guides and teachers, had attempted to depose them, and had drawn the greatest part of the church into the conspiracy; whom therefore he endeavors, by soft words and hard arguments, to reduce back to peace and unity. His modesty and humility in it are peculiarly discernible, not only that he wholly writes it in the name of the church of Rome, without so much as ever mentioning his own, but in that he treats them with such gentle and mild persuasives. Nothing of sourness, or an imperious lording it over God's heritage to be seen in the whole epistle. Had he known himself to be the infallible judge of controversies, to whose sentence the whole Christian world was bound to stand, invested with a supreme unaccountable power, from which there lay no appeal, we might have expected to have heard him argue at another rate. But these were the encroachments and usurpations of later ages, when a spirit of covetousness and secular ambition had stifled the modesty and simplicity of those first and best ages of religion. There is so great an affinity in many things, both as to words and matter, between this and the epistle to the Hebrews, as tempted Eusebius and St Jerome of old, and some others before them, to conclude St. Clemens at least the translator of that epistle. This epistle to the Corinthians, after it had been generally bewailed as lost, for many ages, was not more to the benefit of the church in general, than the honor of our own in particular, some forty years since, published here in England, a treasure not sufficiently to be valued. Besides this first, there is the fragment of a second epistle, or rather homily, containing a serious exhortation and direction to a pious life; and which indeed, and which many will persuade us to be his, and to have been written many years before the former, as that which betrays to footsteps of troublesome and unquiet times; but Eusebius, St. Jerome, and Photius assure us, that it was rejected, and never obtained among the ancients equal approbation with the first. And therefore, though we do not peccatorily determine against its being his, yet we think it safer to acquiesce in the judgment of the ancients, than of some few late writers in this matter.

10. As for those writings that are undoubtedly spurious and supposititious, disowned, as Eusebius says, because they did not retain the true

stamp and character of orthodox apostolic doctrine; though the truth is, he speaks it only of the Dialogues of Peter and Appion, not mentioning the decretal epistles, as not worth taking notice of. There are four extant at this day, that are entitled to him; the Apostolical Canons and the Constitutions, (said to be penned by him, though dictated by the apostles,) the Recognitions, and the Epistle to St. James. For the two first, the Apostolical Canons and Constitutions, I have declared my sense of them in another place, to which I shall add nothing here. The Recognitions succeed, conveyed to us under different titles by the ancients; sometimes styled St. Clemens's Acts, History, Chronicle; sometimes St. Peter's Acts, Itinerary, Periods, Dialogues with Appion, all which are unquestionably but different inscriptions (or it may be parcels) of the same book.—True it is what Photius suspected, and Rufinus (who translated it) expressly tells us, that there were two several editions of this book, differing in some things, but the same in most. And it deserves to be considered, whether the *τα Κλημεντια*, mentioned by Nicephorus, and which he says the church received, and denies to be those meant by Eusebius, and those Clementine Homilies lately published under that very name, be not that other edition of the Recognitions, seeing they exactly answer Rufinus's character; differing in some things, but in most agreeing with them. There is yet a third edition, or rather abstract out of all, styled Clemens's Epitome of the Acts, Travels, and Preaching of St. Peter, agreeing with the former, though keeping more close to the homilies than the other. This I guess to have been compiled by Simeon the metaphrast; as for other reasons, so especially because the appendage added to it by the same hand, concerning Clemens's martyrdom, is word for word the same with that of Metaphrastes, the close of it only excepted, which is taken out of St. Ephræm's homily of the miracle done at his tomb.

11. The Recognitions themselves are undoubtedly of very great antiquity, written about the same time, and by the same hand (as Blonde, probably conjectures) with the Constitutions, about the year 180, or not long after. Sure I am, they are cited by Origen as the work of Clemens, in his Periods, and his large quotation is in so many words extant in them at this day. Nay, before him we meet with a very long fragment of Bardesanes, the Syrian, (who flourished ann. 180,) concerning fate, word for word the same with what we find in the Recognitions; and it seems equally reasonable to suppose that Bardesanes had it thence, as that the other borrowed it from him. Nay, what if Bardesanes himself was the author of these books? It is certain that he was a man of great parts and learning, a man prompt and eloquent, an acute and subtle disputant, heretically inclined, for he came out of the school of Valentinus, whose uncouth notions he had so deeply imbibed, that even after his recantation, he could never get clear from the dregs of them, as Eusebius informs us: though Epiphanius tells us, he was first orthodox, and afterwards fell into the errors of that sect, like a well-freighted ship, that having duly performed its voyage, is cast away in the very sight of the harbor. He was a great

mathematician and astrologer, accurately versed in Chaldean learning, and wrote incomparable dialogues concerning fate, which he dedicated to the emperor Antoninus. And surely none can have looked into the Recognitions, but he must see what a considerable part the doctrines concerning fate, the genesis, the influence of the stars and heavenly constellations, and such like notions, make there of St. Peter's and St. Clemens's dialogues and discourses. To which we may add what Photius has observed, and is abundantly evident from the thing itself, that these books are considerable for their clearness and perspicuity, their eloquent style, and grave discourses, and that great variety of learning that is in them; plainly showing their composer to have been a master in all human learning, and the study of philosophy. I might further remark, that Bardesanes seems to have had a peculiar genius for books of this nature, it being particularly noted of him, that besides the Scriptures, he traded in certain apocryphal writings. He wrote *πλείστα συγγράμματα*, which St. Jerome renders "infinite volumes;" written indeed for the most part in Syriac, but which his scholars translated into Greek, though he himself was sufficiently skilful in that language, as Epiphanius notes. In the number of these books might be the Recognitions, plausibly fathered upon St. Clemens, who was notoriously known to be St. Peter's companion and disciple: and were but some of his many books now extant, I doubt not but a much greater affinity both in style and notions would appear between them. But this I propose only as a probable conjecture, and leave it at the reader's pleasure either to reject or entertain it. I am not ignorant that both St. Jerome and Photius charge these books with heretical opinions, especially some derogatory of the honor of the Son of God, which it may be Rufinus (who confesses the same thing, and supposes them to have been inserted by some heretical hand) concealed in his translation: nay, Epiphanius tells us, that the Ebionites did so extremely corrupt them, that they scarce left any thing of St. Clemens sound and true in them, which he observes from their repugnancy to his other writings, those Encyclical epistles of his (as he calls them) which were read in the churches. But then it is plain, he means it only of those copies which were in the possession of those heretics, probably not now extant, nor do any of those particular adulterations which he says they made in them, appear in our books, nor in those large and, to be sure, uncorrupt fragments of Bardesanes and Origen is there the least considerable variation from those books which we have at this day. But of this enough.

12. The epistle to St. James, the brother of our Lord is, no doubt, of equal date with the rest; in the close whereof the author pretends, that he was commanded by St. Peter to give him an account of his travels, discourses, and the success of his ministry, under the title of Clemens's Epitome of Peter's popular Preachings, to which he tells him he would next proceed. So that this epistle originally was nothing but a preface to St. Peter's Acts or Periods; (the same in effect with the Recognitions;) and, accordingly, in the late edition of the Clementine Homilies, (which have the very

title mentioned in that epistle,) it is found prefixed before them. This epistle (as Photius tells us) varied according to different editions; sometimes pretending that it, and the account of St. Peter's Acts annexed to it, were written by St. Peter himself, and by him sent to St. James; sometimes that they were written by Clemens, at St. Peter's instance and command. Whence he conjectures that there was a two-fold edition of St. Peter's Acts, one said to be written by himself, the other by Clemens; and that when in time the first was lost, that pretending to St. Clemens did remain: for so he assures us he constantly found it, in those many copies that he met with, notwithstanding that the epistle and inscription were sometimes different and various. By the original whereof, now published, appears the fraud of the factors of the Romish church, who in all Latin editions have added an appendix almost twice as large as the epistle itself. And well had it been, had this been the only instance wherein some men, to shore up a tottering cause, have made bold with the writers of the ancient church.

His writings:—*Genuine*, "Epistola ad Corinthios." *Doubtful*, "Epistola ad Corinth. secunda." *Supposititious*, "Epistola ad Jacobum Fratrem Domini." "Recognitionum, lib. x." *Τα Κλημεντία*, seu, "Homiliæ Clementinæ." "Constitutionum, App. lib. viii." "Canones Apostolici."

ST. IGNATIUS.

FINDING nothing recorded concerning the country or parentage of this holy man, I shall not build upon mere fancy and conjecture. He is ordinarily styled, both by himself and others, Theophorus; which, though like Justus, it be oft no more than a common epithet, yet is it sometimes used as a proper name. It is written according to the different nations, either *Θεοφορος*; and then it denotes a divine person, a man whose soul is full of God, and all holy and divine qualities, *Ο του Χριστου εν τη ψυχη περιφερον*, as Ignatius himself is said to explain it; or *Θεοφορος*, and so, in a passive signification it implies one that is borne or carried, by God. And in this latter sense he is said to have derived the title, from our Lord's taking him up into his arms. For thus we are told, that he was that very child whom our Saviour took into his arms, and set in the midst of his disciples, as the most lively instance of innocence and humility. And this is affirmed (if number might carry it) not only by the Greeks in the public rituals; by Metaphrastes, Necephorus, and others, but (as the primate of Armagh observes from the manuscripts in his own possession) by two Syriac writers, more ancient than they. But how confidently or generally soever it be reported, the story at best is precarious and uncertain, not to say absolutely false and groundless. Sure I am St. Chrysostom (who had far better opportunities of knowing than they) expressly affirms of Ignatius, that he never saw our Saviour, or enjoyed any familiarity or converse with him.

2. In his younger years, he was brought up under apostolical institution: so Chrysostom tells

us, that he was intimately conversant with the apostles, educated and nursed up by them, every where at hand, and made partaker, both of their familiar discourses, and more secret and uncommon mysteries. Which, though it is probable he means of his particular conversation with St. Peter and Paul; yet some of the forementioned authors, and not they only, but the acts of his martyrdom, written as is supposed by some present at it, further assure us, that he was St. John's disciple. Being fully instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, he was, for his eminent parts, and the great piety of his life, chosen to be bishop of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, and the most famous and renowned city of the east; not more remarkable among foreign writers for being the oriental seat of the Roman emperors, and their viceroys and governors, than it is in ecclesiastics, for its eminent entertainment of the Christian faith, its giving the venerable title of Christians to the disciples of the holy Jesus, and St. Peter's first and peculiar residence in this place. Whence the synod of Constantinople, assembled under Nectarius, in their synodical epistle to the western bishops, deservedly call it "the most ancient and truly apostolic church of Antioch, in which the honorable name of Christians did first commence." In all which respects it is frequently in the writings of the church, by a proud kind of title, styled *Θεωπολις*, or the City of God. That Ignatius was constituted bishop of this church, is allowed on all hands; though as to the time and order of his coming to it, almost the same difficulties occur which before did in Clemens's succession to the see of Rome, possibly not readily to be removed but by the same method of solution, easily granted in this case by Baronius himself, and some other writers of note in that church. I shall not need to prove what is evident enough in itself, and plainly acknowledged by the ancients; that Peter and Paul planted Christianity in this city, and both concurred to the foundation of this church; the one applying himself to the Jews, the other to the Gentiles. And large enough was the vineyard to admit the joint endeavors of these two great planters of the gospel; it being a vast populous city, containing at that time, according to St. Chrysostom's computation, no less than two hundred thousand souls. But the apostles (who could not stay always in one place) being called off to the ministry of other churches, saw it necessary to substitute others in their room; the one resigning his trust to Euodius, the other to Ignatius. Hence, in the Apostolic Constitutions, Euodius is said to be ordained bishop of Antioch by St. Peter, and Ignatius, by St. Paul; till Euodius dying, and the Jewish converts being better reconciled to the Gentiles, Ignatius succeeded in the sole care and presidency over that church, wherein he might possibly be afterwards confirmed by Peter himself. In which respect probably the author of the Alexandrine Chronicon meant it, when he affirms, that Ignatius was constituted bishop of Antioch by the apostles. By this means he may be said both immediately to succeed the apostle, as Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, and Chrysostom affirm; and withal to be the next after Euodius, as St. Jerome, Socrates, Metaphrastes, and others place him. However, Euo-

dus dying, and he being settled in it by the apostles' hands, might be justly said to succeed St. Peter; in which sense it is, that some of the ancients expressly affirm him to have received his consecration from St. Peter, and so their own historian relates, that Peter coming to Antioch in his passage to Rome, and finding Euodius lately dead, committed the government of it to Ignatius, whom he made bishop of that place: though it will be a little difficult to reconcile the times to an agreement with that account.

3. Somewhat above forty years St. Ignatius continued in his charge at Antioch, (Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople, assigns him but four years; the figure μ , for forty, being probably, through the carelessness of transcribers, slipped out of the account,) in the midst of very stormy and tempestuous times. But he, like a wise and prudent pilot, sat at the stern, and declined the dangers that threatened them, by his prayers and tears, his fastings, and the constancy of his preaching, and those indefatigable pains he took among them, fearing lest any of the more weak and unsettled Christians might be overborne with the storms of persecution. Never did a little calm and quiet interval happen, but he rejoiced in the prosperity of the church; though, as to himself, he somewhat impatiently expected and longed for martyrdom, without which he accounted he could never perfectly attain to the love of Christ, nor fill up the duty and measures of a true disciple; which accordingly afterwards became his portion. Indeed, as to the particular acts of his government, nothing memorable is recorded of him in the antiquities of the church, more than what Socrates relates, (by what authority I confess I know not,) that he saw a vision, wherein he heard the angels, with alternate hymns, celebrating the honor of the Holy Trinity, in imitation whereof he instituted the way of antiphonal hymns in the church of Antioch; which thence spread itself over the whole Christian church. Whether this story was made on purpose to outvie the Arians, who were wont, on the sabbaths and Lord's-days, to sing alternate hymns in their congregations, with some tart reflection upon the orthodox, inasmuch that Chrysostom was forced to introduce the same way of singing into the orthodox assemblies; or whether it was really instituted by Ignatius, but afterwards grown into disuse, I will not say. Certain it is, that Flavianus, afterwards bishop of Antioch, in the reign of Constantius, is said to have been the first that thus established the choir, and appointed David's Psalms to be sung by turns; which thence propagated itself to other churches. St. Ambrose was the first that brought it into the western church, reviving (says the historian) the ancient institution of Ignatius, long disused among the Greeks. But to return.

4. It was about the year of Christ 107, when Trajan, the emperor, swelled with his late victory over the Scythians and the Daci, about the ninth year of his reign, came to Antioch, to make preparation for the war which he was resolved to make upon the Parthians and Armenians. He entered the city with the pomps and solemnities of a triumph; and as his first care usually was about the concerns of religion, he began pre-

sently to inquire into that affair. Indeed he looked upon it as an affront to his other victories to be conquered by Christians; and therefore, to make his religion stoop, had already commenced a persecution against them in other parts of the empire, which he resolved to carry on here. St. Ignatius (whose solicitude for the good of his flock made him continually stand upon his guard) thinking it more prudent to go himself than stay to be sent for, of his accord presented himself to the emperor, between whom there is said to have passed a large and particular discourse; the emperor wondering that he dared to transgress his laws, while the good man asserted his own innocence, and the power which God hath given them over evil spirits, and that the gods of the Gentiles were no better than demons, there being but one supreme Deity, who made the world, and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who, though crucified under Pilate, had yet destroyed him that had the power of sin, that is, the devil, and would ruin the whole power and empire of the demons, and tread it under the feet of those who carried God in their hearts. The issue was, that he was cast into prison; where (if what the Greek rituals and some others report, be true) he was, for the constancy and resolution of his profession, subjected to the most severe and merciless torments, whipped with *plumbate*, scourges with leaden bullets at the end of them, forced to hold fire in his hands, while his sides were burnt with paper dipped in oil, his feet stood upon live coals, and his flesh was torn off with burning pincers. Having, by an invincible patience, overcame the malice and cruelty of his tormentors, the emperor pronounced the final sentence upon him, that being incurably overrun with superstition, he should be carried bound by soldiers to Rome, and there thrown as a prey to wild beasts. The good man heartily rejoiced at the fatal decree: "I thank thee, O Lord," said he, "that thou has condescended thus perfectly to honor me with thy love, and has thought me worthy, with thy apostle Paul, to be bound with iron chains." With that he cheerfully embraced his chains, and having fervently prayed for his church, and with tears recommended it to the divine care and providence, he delivered up himself into the hands of his keepers, that were appointed to transport him to the place of execution.

5. It may justly seem strange, and it was that which puzzled the great Scaliger, why he should be sent so vast a way, from Antioch in Syria, to be martyred at Rome. Whereof these probable accounts may be rendered. First, it was usual with the governors of provinces, where the malefactors were more than ordinarily eminent, either for the quality of their persons, or the nature of their crimes, to send them to Rome, that their punishment might be made exemplary in the eye of the world. Secondly, his enemies were not willing he should suffer at home, where he was too much honored and esteemed already, and where his death would but raise him into a higher veneration with the people, and settle their minds in a firmer belief of that faith, which he had taught them, and which they then saw him sealing with his blood. Thirdly, by so long a journey, they hoped that in all places where he came, men would be

more effectually terrified from the embracing that religion, which they saw so much distasted and resented by the emperor, and the profession whereof could not be purchased but at so dear a rate; besides the probability, that by this usage the constancy of Ignatius himself might be broken, and he forced to yield. Fourthly, they designed to make the good man's punishment as severe and heavy as they could; and therefore so contrived it, that there might be a concurrence of circumstances to render it bitter and grievous to him. His great age, being then probably above four score years old, the vast length and tediousness of the journey, (which was not a little increased, as Chrysostom observes, by their going the furthest way about, for they went not the direct passage to Rome, but by infinite windings, diverted from place to place,) the trouble and difficulty of the passage, bad at all times, but much worse now in winter, the want of all necessary conveniences and accommodations for so aged and infirm a person, the rude and merciless usage of his keepers, who treated him with all ruggedness and inhumanity: "from Syria even to Rome, both by sea and land, I fight with beasts: night and day I am chained to ten leopards, (which is my military guard,) who, the kinder I am to them, are the more cruel and fierce to me," as himself complains. Besides, what was dearer to him than all this, his credit and reputation might be in danger to suffer with him; seeing, at so great a distance, the Romans were generally more likely to understand him to suffer as a malefactor for some notorious crime, than as a martyr for religion; and this Metaphrastes assures us, was one particular end of his sending thither. Not to say that beyond all this, the divine providence (which knows how to bring good out of evil, and to overrule the designs of bad men to wise and excellent purposes) might the rather permit it to be so, that the leading so great a man so far in triumph, might make the faith more remarkable and illustrious, that he might have the better opportunity to establish and confirm the Christians, who flocked to him from all parts as he came along; and by giving them the example of a generous virtue, arm them with the stronger resolution to die for their religion, and especially that he might seal the truth of his religion at Rome, where his death might be, (as Chrysostom speaks,) "a tutor of piety," and teach the city that was so famous for arts and wisdom, a new and better philosophy than they had learned before. To all which may be added, that this was done not by the provincial governor, who had indeed power of executing capital punishments within his own province, (which seems to have been the main ground of Scaliger's scruple,) but immediately by the emperor himself, whose pleasure and command it was that he should be sent to Rome; whither we must now follow him to his martyrdom: in the account whereof we shall, for the main, keep to the acts of it, written, in all probability, by Philo and Agathopus, the companions of his journey, and present at his passion; two ancient versions whereof the incomparable bishop Usher first recovered and published to the world.

6. Being consigned to a guard of ten soldiers, he took his leave of his beloved Antioch, (and a

sad parting no doubt there was between him and his people ; who were to see his face no more,) and was conducted on foot to Seleucia, a port-town of Syria, about sixteen miles distant thence ; the very place whence Paul and Barnabas set sail for Cyprus. Here, going aboard, after a tedious and difficult voyage, they arrived at Smyrna, a famous city of Ionia, where they were no sooner set on shore, but he went to salute St. Polycarp, bishop of the place, his old fellow-pupil under St. John the apostle. Joyful was the meeting of these two holy men : St. Polycarp being so far from being discouraged, that he rejoiced in the other's chains, and earnestly pressed him to a firm and final perseverance. Hither came in the country round about, especially the bishops, presbyters, and deacons of Asian churches, to behold so venerable a sight, to partake of the holy martyr's prayers and blessing, and to encourage him to hold on to his consummation. To requite whose kindness, and for their further instruction and establishment in the faith, he wrote letters from hence to several churches ; one to the Ephesians, wherein he commends Onesimus their bishop for his singular charity ; another to the Magnesians, a city seated upon the river Meander, which he sent by Damas their bishop, Bassus and Apollonius, presbyters, and Sotio, deacon of that church ; a third to the Trallians, by Polybius their bishop, wherein he particularly presses them to subjection to their spiritual guides, and to avoid those pestilent heretical doctrines that were then risen in the church. A fourth he wrote to the Christians at Rome, to acquaint them with his present state, and passionate desire not to be hindered in that course of martyrdom which he was now hastening to accomplish.

7. His keepers, a little impatient of their stay at Smyrna, set sail for Troas, a noted city of the lesser Phrygia, not far from the ruins of the ancient Troy : where, at his arrival, he was not a little refreshed with the news that he received, of the persecution ceasing in the church of Antioch. Hither several churches sent their messengers to visit and salute him ; and hence he despatched two epistles, one to the church of Philadelphia, to press them to love and unity, and to stand fast in the truth and simplicity of the gospel ; the other to the church of Smyrna, from whence he lately departed, which he sent, as also the former, by Burrhus the deacon, whom they and the Ephesians had sent to wait upon him : and together with that, (as Eusebius informs us,) he wrote privately to St. Polycarp, particularly recommending to him the care and oversight of the church of Antioch, for which, as a vigilant pastor, he could not but have a tender and very dear regard ; though very learned men, (but certainly without any just reason,) think this not to have been a distinct epistle to the former ; but jointly directed and intended to St. Polycarp and his church of Smyrna. Which, however it be, they conclude it as certain that the epistle to St. Polycarp now extant, is none of it, as in which nothing of the true temper and spirit of Ignatius does appear ; while others of great note not improbably contend for it as genuine and sincere. From Troas they sailed to Neapolis, a maritime town of Macedonia, thence to Philippi, a Roman colony, (the very same

journey which St. Paul had gone before him,) where, (as Polycarp intimates in his epistle to that church,) they were entertained with all imaginable kindness and courtesy, and conducted forwards in their journey. Hence they passed on foot through Macedonia and Epirus, till they came to Epidamnus, a city of Dalmatia ; where again taking ship they sailed through the Adriatic, and arrived at Regium, a port town in Italy, whence they directed their course through the Tyrrhenian Sea to Puteoli ; Ignatius desiring (if it might have been granted) thence to have gone by land, that he might have traced the same way, by which St. Paul went to Rome. After a day and a night's stay at Puteoli, a prosperous wind quickly carried them to the Roman port, the great harbor and station for their navy, built near Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, about sixteen miles from Rome ; whither the holy martyr longed to come, as much desirous to be at the end of his race, as his keepers, weary of their voyage, were to be at the end of their journey.

8. The Christians at Rome, daily expecting his arrival, were come out to meet and entertain him ; and accordingly received him with equal resentment of joy and sorrow. Glad they were of the presence and company of so great and good a man ; but quickly found their joy allayed with the remembrance, how soon, and by how severe a death he was to be taken from them : and when some of them did but intimate, that possibly the people might be taken off from desiring his death, he expressed a pious indignation, entreating them to cast no rubs in his way, nor do any thing that might hinder him, now he was hastening to his crown. Being conducted to Rome, he was presented to the prefect of the city ; and, as it is probable, the emperor's letters concerning him were delivered. In the mean time, while things were preparing for his martyrdom, he and the brethren that resorted to him, improved their time to pious purposes ; he prayed with them and for them ; heartily recommended the state of the church to the care and protection of our blessed Saviour, and earnestly solicited heaven, that it would stop the persecution that was begun, and bless Christians with a true love and charity towards one another. That his punishment might be the more pompous and public, one of their solemn festivals, the time of their Saturnalia, and that part of it when they celebrated their Sigillaria, was pitched on for his execution ; at which time they were wont to entertain the people with the bloody conflicts of gladiators, and the hunting of, and fighting with wild beasts. Accordingly, on the 13th of the calends of January, that is, December 20, he was brought out into the amphitheatre, and according to his own fervent desire, that he might have no other grave but the bellies of wild beasts, the lions were let loose upon him, whose roaring alarm he entertained with no other concernment, than that now, as God's own corn, he should be ground between the teeth of these wild beasts, and become white bread for his heavenly Master. The lions were not long doing their work, but quickly dispatched their meal, and left nothing but what they could not well devour, a few hard and solid bones. This throwing of persons to wild beasts was accounted among the Romans, *inter*

summa supplicia, and was never used but for very capital offences, and towards the vilest and most despicable malefactors, under which rank they beheld the Christians, who were so familiarly destined to this kind of death, (that, as Tertullian tells us,) upon any trifling and frivolous pretence, if a famine or an earthquake did but happen, the common outcry was, *Christianos ad leones*, "Away with the Christians to the lions."

9. Among other Christians that were mournful spectators of this tragic scene, were the deacons I mentioned, who had been the companions of his journey, who bore not the least part in the sorrows of that day. And that they might not return home with nothing but the account of so sad a story, they gathered up the bones which the wild beasts had spared, and transported them to Antioch, where they were joyfully received, and honorably entombed in the cemetery, without the gate that leads to Daphne. A passage which Chrysostom, according to his rhetorical vein, elegantly amplifies as the great honor and treasure of that place. From hence, in the reign of Theodosius, they were, by his command, with mighty pomp and solemnity, removed to the Tycheon within the city; a temple heretofore dedicated to the public genius of the city, but now consecrated to the memory of the martyr. And for their translation afterwards to Rome, and the miracles said to be done by them, they that are further curious, may inquire. For indeed I am not now at leisure for these things. But I can direct the reader to one that will give him very punctual and particular accounts of them, and in what places the several parcels of his relics are bestowed; no less than five churches in Rome enriched with them, besides others in Naples, Sicily, France, Flanders, Germany, and indeed where not? And verily, but that some men have a very happy faculty at doing wonders by multiplication, a man would be apt to wonder how a few bones (and they were not many which the lions spared) could be able to serve so many several churches. I could likewise tell him a long story of the various travels and donations of St. Ignatius's head, and by what good fortune it came at last to the Jesuits' college at Rome, where it is richly enshrined, solemnly and religiously worshipped, but that I am afraid my reader will give me no thanks for my pains.

10. About this time, or a little before, while Trajan was yet at Antioch, he stopped, or at least mitigated the persecution against Christians; for having had an account from Pliny, the proconsul of Bithynia, (whom he had employed to that purpose,) concerning the innocency and simplicity of the Christians, that they were a harmless and inoffensive generation; and lately received a letter from Tiberianus, governor of Palestina Prima, wherein he told him, that he was wearied out in executing the laws against the Galileans, who crowded themselves in such multitudes to execution, that he could neither by persuasion nor threatenings keep them from owning themselves to be Christians, further praying his majesty's advice in that affair: hereupon he gave command, that no inquisition should be made after the Christians, though if any of them offered themselves, execution should be done upon them: so that the fire which had hitherto flamed and burned out,

began now to be extinguished, and only crept up and down in private corners. There are that tell us, that Trajan having heard a full account of Ignatius and his sufferings, and how undauntedly he had undergone that bitter death, repented of what he had done, and was particularly moved to mitigate and relax the persecution: whereby (as Metaphrastes observes) not only Ignatius's life, but his death became πολλὴν προξένου ἀγαθόν, the procurer of great peace and prosperity, and the glory and establishment of the Christian faith.—Some not improbably conceive, that the severe judgments which happened not long after, might have a peculiar influence to dispose the emperor's mind to more tenderness and pity for the remainder of his life. For during his abode at Antioch, there were dreadful and unusual earthquakes, fatal to other places, but which fell most heavy upon Antioch, at that time full more than ordinary, with a vast army and confluence of people from all parts of the world. Among thousands that died, and far greater numbers that were maimed and wounded, Peto the consul lost his life; and Trajan himself, had he not escaped out at a window, had undergone the same fate. Accidents which I doubt not prepared his mind to a more serious consideration and regard of things. Though these calamities happened not till some years after Ignatius's death.

11. Whether these judgments were immediate instances of the Divine displeasure for the severity used against the Christians, and particularly for their cruelty to Ignatius, I will not say. Certain it is, that the Christian church had a mighty loss in so useful and excellent a person. For he was a good man, one in whose breast the true spirit of religion did eminently dwell; a man of very moderate and mortified affections, in which sense he doubtless intended that famous saying, so much celebrated by the ancients, Ο ΕΜΟΣ ΕΡΩΣ ΕΞΕΤΑΥΡΩΤΑΙ, "My love is crucified;" that is, (for to that purpose he explains it in the very words that follow,) his appetites and desires were crucified to the world, and all the lusts and pleasures of it. We may, with St. Chrysostom, consider him in a threefold capacity, as an apostle, a bishop, and a martyr. As an apostle (in the larger acceptation of the word, he being as the Greek officers style him, "the immediate successor of the apostles in their see") he was careful to diffuse and propagate the genuine doctrine which he had received of the apostles, and took a kind of oecumenical care of all churches. Even in his passage to Rome he surveyed τὰς κατὰ πόλιν παροικίας, as Eusebius tells us, the dioceses, or churches, that belonged to all the cities whither he came; confirming them by his sermons and exhortations, and directing epistles to several of the principals for their further order and establishment in the faith. As a bishop, he was a diligent, faithful, and industrious pastor, infinitely careful of his charge; which though so exceedingly vast and numerous, he prudently instructed, governed, and superintended, and that in the midst of ticklish and troublesome times, above forty years together. He had a true and unchangeable love for his people; and when ravished from them in order to his martyrdom, there was not any church to whom he wrote, but he particularly begged their prayers to

God for his church at Antioch; and of some of them desired that they would send *ἀποσταλόμενον*, a divine ambassador thither, on purpose to comfort them, and to congratulate their happy deliverance from the persecution. And because he knew that the prosperity of the church and the good of souls were no less undermined by heresy from within, than assaulted by violence and persecution from without, he had a peculiar eye to that, and took all occasions of warning the church to beware of heretics and seducers; those beasts in the shape of men, whose wild notions and brutish manners began even then to embase religion, and corrupt the simplicity of the faith. Indeed, he filled up all the measures of a wise governor, and an excellent guide of souls: and St. Chrysostom runs through the particular characters of the bishop delineated by St. Paul, and finds them all accomplished and made good in him; with so generous a care, (says he,) so exact a diligence did he preside over the flock of Christ, even to the making good what our Lord describes as the utmost pitch and line of episcopal fidelity, "to lay down his life for the sheep;" and this he did with all courage and fortitude; which is the last consideration we shall remark concerning him.

12. As a martyr he gave the higher testimony to his fidelity, and to the truth of that religion which he both preached and practised. He gloried in his sufferings as his honor and his privilege, and looked upon chains as his jewels and his ornaments: he was raised above either the love or fear of the present state, and could with as much ease and freedom (says Chrysostom) lay down his life, as another man could put off his clothes. The truth is, his soul was strangely inflamed with a desire of martyrdom; he wished every step of his journey to meet with the wild beasts that were prepared for him; and tells the Romans, he desired nothing more than they might presently do his work, that he would invite and court them speedily to devour him, and if he found them backward, as they had been towards others, he would provoke and force them. And though the death he was to undergo was most savage and barbarous, and dressed up in the most horrid and frightful shapes, enough to startle the firmest resolution, yet could they make no impression upon his impregnable adamant mind, any more than the dashes of a wave upon a rock of marble. "Let the fire," said he, "and the cross, and the assaults of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, cutting of limbs, battering the whole body in pieces; yea, and all the torments which the devil can invent come upon me, so I may but attain to be with Jesus Christ;" professing he thought it much better to die for Christ, than to live and reign the sole monarch of the world. Expressions certainly of a mighty zeal, and a divine passion wound up to its highest note. And yet, after all, this excellent person was humble to the lowest step of abasement. He often professes that he looked upon himself as an abortive, and the very least of the faithful in the whole church of Antioch; and though it was his utmost ambition, yet he did not know whether he was worthy to suffer for religion. I might in the last place enter into a discourse concerning his epistles; (the true indices of the piety and divine temper of his mind;) those seven

I mean, enumerated and quoted by Eusebius, and collected by St. Polycarp, as himself expressly testifies; but shall forbear, despairing to offer any thing considerable after so much as has been said by learned men about them; only observing, that in the exceptions to the argument from St. Polycarp's testimony, little more is said even by those who have managed it to the best advantage, than what might be urged against the most genuine writing in the world. I add St. Polycarp's character of these epistles, whereby he recommends them as highly useful and advantageous; that "they contain in them instructions and exhortations to faith and patience, and whatever is necessary to build us up in the religion of our Lord and Saviour."

His writings:—*Genuine*, "Ad Ephesios Epistola, I." "Ad Magnesianos, I." "Ad Trallianos, I." "Ad Romanos, I." "Ad Philadelphenos, I." "Ad Smyrnicos, I." "Epistola ad Polycarpum."—*Spurious*, "Ad Mariam Cassobolitam, I." "Ad Tarsenes, I." "Ad Antiochenos, I." "Ad Philippenses, I." "Ad Heronem, I." "Ad B. Virg. Mariam, I." "Ad Joannem Apostolum, II."

ST. POLYCARP.

ST. POLYCARP was born towards the latter end of Nero's reign, or it may be a little sooner; his great age at the time of his death, with some other circumstances, rendering it highly probable, if not certain. Uncertain it is where he was born; and I see no sufficient reason to the contrary why we may not fix his nativity at Smyrna, an eminent city of Ionia, in the lesser Asia, the first of the seven that entered their claim of being the birth-place of the famous Homer; in memory whereof they had a library, and a four-square portico, called Homereum, with a temple and the statue of Homer adjoining to it, and used a sort of brass coin, which they called *Ὀμπεριον*, after his name, and probably with his image stamped upon it. A place it was of great honor and renown, and has not only very magnificent titles heaped upon it by the writers of those times, but in several ancient inscriptions set up by the public order of the senate, not long after the time of Adrian, it is styled the chief city of Asia, both for beauty and greatness, the most splendid, the metropolis of Asia, and the ornament of Ionia. But it had a far greater and a more honorable privilege to glory in, if it was (as we suppose) the place of St. Polycarp's nativity, however of his education, the seat of his episcopal care and charge, and the scene of his tragedy and martyrdom. The Greeks, in their *Menæon*, report that he was educated at the charge of a certain noble matron, (whose name, we are told, was Callisto,) a woman of great piety and charity; who, when she had exhausted all her granaries in relieving the poor, had them suddenly filled again by St. Polycarp's prayers. The circumstances whereof are more particularly related by Pionius, (who suffered, if, which I must question, it was the same, under the Decian persecution,) to this effect. Callisto, warned by an

angel in a dream, sent and redeemed Polycarp, (then but a child,) of some who sold him, brought him home, took care of his education, and finding him a youth of ripe and pregnant parts, as he grew up made him the major domo and steward of her house; whose charity, it seems, he dispensed with a very liberal hand, inasmuch, that during her absence he had emptied all her barns and store-houses to the uses of the poor. For which being charged by his fellow-servants at her return, she not knowing then to what purpose he had employed them, called for the keys, and commanded him to resign his trust; which was no sooner done, but at her entrance in, she found all places full, and in as good condition as she had left them, which his prayers and intercession with Heaven had again replenished. As, indeed, Heaven can be sometimes content rather to work a miracle, than charity shall suffer and fare the worse for its kindness and bounty. In his younger years he is said to have been instructed in the Christian faith by Bucolus, whom the same Menæon elsewhere informs us St. John had consecrated bishop of Smyrna: however, authors of more unquestionable credit and ancient date tell us, that he was St. John's disciple, and not his only, but as Irenæus, who was his scholar, (followed herein by St. Jerome,) assures us, he was taught by the apostles, and familiarly conversed with many who had seen our Lord in the flesh.

2. Bucolus, the vigilant and industrious bishop of Smyrna, being dead, (by whom St. Polycarp was, as we are told, made deacon and catechist of that church, an office which he discharged with great diligence and success,) Polycarp was ordained in his room, according to Bucolus's own prediction, who, as the Greeks report, had in his lifetime foretold that he should be his successor. He was constituted by St. John, say the ancients generally; though Irenæus, followed herein by the chronicle of Alexandria, affirms it to have been done by the apostles: whether any of the apostles besides St. John were then alive, or whether he means apostolic persons, (commonly styled apostles in the writings of the church,) who joined with St. John in the consecration. Eusebius says, that Polycarp was familiarly conversant with the apostles, and received the government of the church of Smyrna from those who had been eye-witnesses and ministers of our Lord. It makes not a little for the honor of St. Polycarp, and argues his mighty diligence and solicitude for the good of souls, that, (as we shall note more anon,) Ignatius passing to his martyrdom, wrote to him, and particularly recommended to him the inspection and oversight of his church at Antioch; knowing him, (says Eusebius,) to be truly an apostolical man, and being assured that he would use his utmost care and fidelity in that matter. The author of the Alexandrian Chronicle tells us, that it was the bishop of Smyrna (who could not well be any other than St. Polycarp) to whom St. John committed the tutorage and education of the young man, whom he took up in his visitation, who ran away, and became captain of a company of loose and debauched highwaymen, and was afterwards reduced and reclaimed by that apostle. But seeing Clemens Alexandrinus, who relates the story, sets down neither the name of the bishop, nor the city,

though he confesses there were some that made mention of it; nor is this circumstance taken notice of by any other ancient writer, nor that bishop's neglecting of his charge well consistent with St. Polycarp's care and industry, I shall leave the story as I find it. Though it cannot be denied but that Smyrna was near to Ephesus, as St. Clemens says that city also was, and that St. John seems to have had a more than ordinary regard to that church; it being, next Ephesus, the first of those seven famous Asian churches to whom he directed his epistles, and St. Polycarp this time bishop of it: for that he was "that angel of the church at Smyrna," to whom that apocalyptic epistle was sent, is not only highly probable, but by a learned man put past all question. I must confess that the character and circumstances ascribed by St. John to the angel of that church seem very exactly to agree with Polycarp, and with no other bishop of that church (about those times especially) that we read of in the history of the church. And whoever compares the account of St. Polycarp's martyrdom, with the notices and intimations which the Apocalypse there gives of that person's sufferings and death, will find the prophecy and the event suit together. That which may seem to make most against it, is the long time of his presidency over that see: seeing by this account he must sit at least seventy-four years bishop of that church, from the latter end of Domitian's reign (when the Apocalypse was written) to the persecution under M. Aurelius, when he suffered. To which no other solution needs to be given, than that his great, nay extreme age at the time of his death, renders it not at all improbable; especially when we find, several ages after, that Remigius, bishop of Rhemes, sat seventy-four years bishop of that place.

3. It was not many years after St. John's death, when the persecution under Trajan began to be reinforced, wherein the eastern parts had a very large share, ann. Chr. 107. Ignatius was condemned by the emperor, at Antioch, and sentenced to be transported to Rome, in order to his execution. In his voyage thither he put in at Smyrna, to salute and converse with Polycarp; these holy men mutually comforting and encouraging each other, and conferring together about the affairs of the church. From Smyrna, Ignatius and his company sailed to Troas, whence he sent back an epistle to the church of Smyrna, wherein he endeavors to fortify them against the errors of the times, which had crept in amongst them; especially against those who undermined our Lord's humanity, and denied his coming in the flesh, affirming him to have suffered only in an imaginary and phantastic body. An opinion (which as it deserved) he severely censures, and strongly refutes. He further presses them to a due observance and regard of their bishop, and those spiritual guides and ministers which, under him, were set over them; and that they would despatch a messenger on purpose to the church of Antioch, to congratulate that peace and tranquillity which then began to be restored to them. Besides this, he wrote particularly to St. Polycarp, whom he knew to be a man of an apostolic temper, a person of singular faithfulness and integrity; recommending to him the care and superintendency of his disconso-

late church of Antioch. In the epistle itself, as extant at this day, there are many short and useful rules and precepts of life, especially such as concern the pastoral and episcopal office. And here again he renews his request concerning Antioch, that a messenger might be sent from Smyrna to that church, and that St. Polycarp would write to other churches to do the like : a thing which he would have done himself, had not his hasty departure from Troas prevented him. And more than this, we find not concerning Polycarp for many years after, till some unhappy differences in the church brought him upon the public stage.

4. It happened that the *quartodeciman* controversy about the observation of Easter, began to grow very high between the eastern and western churches ; each standing very stiffly upon their own way, and justifying themselves by apostolical practice and tradition. That this fire might not break out into a greater flame, St. Polycarp undertakes a journey to Rome, to interpose with those who were the main supports and champions of the opposite party, and gave life and spirit to the controversy. Though the exact time of his coming hither cannot precisely be defined, yet will it in a great measure depend upon Anicetus's succession to that see, in whose time he came thither. Now, evident it is, that almost all the ancient catalogues place him before Soter, and next to Pius, whom he succeeded. This succession Eusebius places ann. Chr. 151 ; a computation certainly much truer than that of Baronius, who places it in the year 167 ; and consonantly to this the Chronicle of Alexandria places St. Polycarp's coming to Rome, ann. Chr. 158, Anton. Imp. 21. It is true indeed, that in two ancient catalogues of the bishops of Rome, set down by Optatus and St. Augustine, Anicetus is set before Pius, and made immediately to succeed Hyginus ; by which account he must be removed fifteen years higher, for so long Eusebius positively says Pius sat. And methinks it seems to look a little this way, that Eusebius having given an account of the emperor Antoninus Pius's rescript in behalf of the Christians, (granted by him in his third consulship, ann. Chr. 140, or thereabouts,) immediately adds, that about the time of the things spoken of, Anicetus governed the church of Rome, and Polycarp came thither upon this errand ; the late peace and indulgence granted to the Christians probably administering both opportunity and encouragement to his journey. But seeing this scheme of times contradicts Eusebius's plain and positive account in other places, and that most ancient catalogues, especially that of Irenæus and Hegesippus (who both lived and were at Rome in the time of Anicetus himself) constantly place Anicetus next to Pius, I dare not disturb this ancient and almost uncontrolled account of things, till I can meet with better evidence for this matter. But whenever it was, over he came to Anicetus, to confer with him about this affair ; which makes me the more wonder at the learned Monsieur Valois, who with so peremptory a confidence denies that Polycarp came to Rome upon this errand ; and that it was not the difference about the paschal solemnity, but some other controversies that brought him thither, when as Irenæus's express words are, (if Eusebius rightly represent them,) that he came to

Rome to confer and discourse with Anicetus, "by reason of a certain controversy concerning the day whereon Easter was to be celebrated." It is true, he says that they differed a little about some other things ; but this hindered not, but that the other was the main errand and inducement of his voyage thither : though even about that, (as he adds,) there was no great contention between them ; for those holy and blessed souls, knowing the main and vital parts of religion not to be concerned in rituals and external observances, mutually saluted and embraced each other. They could not indeed so satisfy one another, as that either would quit the customs which they had observed, but were content still to retain their own sentiments, without violating that charity which was the great and common law of their religion. In token whereof they communicated together at the holy sacrament ; and Anicetus, to put the greater honor upon St. Polycarp, gave him leave to consecrate the eucharist in his own church : after which they parted peaceably ; each side, though retaining their ancient rites, yet maintaining the peace and communion of the church. The ancient Synodicon tells us, that a provincial synod was held at Rome about this matter, by Anicetus, Polycarp, and ten other bishops, where it was decreed that Easter should not be kept at the time, nor after the rites and manner of the Jews, but be celebrated on the eminent and great Lord's-day that followed after it. But improbable it is that St. Polycarp should give his vote to any such determination, when we know that he could not agree with Anicetus in this controversy, and that he left Rome with the same judgment and practice herein wherewith he came thither.

5. During his stay at Rome he mainly set himself to convince gainsayers, testifying the truth of those doctrines which he had received from the apostles ; whereby he reclaimed many to the communion of the church, who had been infected and overrun with errors, especially the pernicious heresies of Marcion and Valentinus. And when Marcion meeting him one day accidentally in the street, and ill resenting it that he did not salute him, called out to him, "Polycarp, own us ;" the good man replied in a just indignation, "I own thee to be the first-born of Satan." So religiously cautious (says Irenæus) were the apostles and their followers, not so much as by discourse to communicate with any that did adulterate and corrupt the truth ; observing St. Paul's rule. "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject ; knowing that he that is such is perverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Indeed St. Polycarp's pious and devout mind was fermented with a mighty zeal and abhorrency of the poisonous and pestilent principles, which in those times corrupted the simplicity of the Christian faith ; insomuch, that when at any time he heard any thing of that nature, he was wont presently to stop his ears, and cry out, "Good God, into what times hast thou reserved me, that I should hear such things !" immediately avoiding the place where he had heard any such discourse. And the same dislike he manifested, in all the epistles which he wrote either to neighbor-churches, or particular persons, warning them of errors, and exhorting them to continue steadfast in the truth. This zeal,

against heretics, and especially his carriage towards Marcion, we may suppose he learnt in a great measure from St. John, of whom he was wont to tell, that going into a bath at Ephesus, and espying Cerinthus the heresiarch there, he presently started back: "Let us begone," said he to his companions, "lest the bath wherein there is Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, fall upon our heads." This passage (says Irenæus) some yet alive heard from St. Polycarp's own mouth, and himself no doubt among the rest; for so he tells us elsewhere, that in his youth, when he was with St. Polycarp in the lesser Asia, he took such particular notice of things, that he perfectly remembered the very place where he used to sit while he discoursed, his goings out and coming in, the shape of his body, and the manner of his life, his discourses to the people, and the account he was wont to give of his familiar converse with St. John, and others who had seen our Lord, whose sayings he rehearsed, and whatever they had told him concerning our Saviour, concerning his miracles and his doctrine, which themselves had either seen or heard, agreeing exactly with the relations of the sacred history. All which Irenæus tells us he particularly took notice of, and faithfully treasured them up in his mind, and made them part of his constant meditation. These are all the material remarks which I find among the ancients concerning Polycarp, during the time of his government of the church at Smyrna. Indeed there are several miracles and particular passages of his life, related by the above-mentioned Pionius, which tend infinitely to exalt the honor of this holy man. But seeing the author is obscure, and that we can have no reasonable satisfaction who he was, and whence he borrowed his notices and accounts of things, I choose rather to suspend my belief, than to entertain the reader with those (at best uncertain) relations which he has given us.

6. In the reign of M. Antoninus and L. Verus, began a severe persecution (whether fourth or fifth, let others inquire) against the Christians. Melito, bishop of Sardis, who lived at that time, and dedicated his apology to the emperors, making mention of new edicts and decrees which the emperors had issued out through Asia, by virtue whereof impudent and greedy informers spoiled and vexed the innocent Christians. But the storm increased into a more violent tempest about the seventh year of their reign, ann. Chr. 167, when the emperor Marcus Antoninus, designing an expedition against the Marcomani, the terror of whom had sufficiently awakened them at Rome, summoned the priests together, and began more solemnly to celebrate their religious rites; and no doubt but he was told that there was no better way to propitiate and atone the gods, than to bear hard upon the Christians, generally looked upon as the most open and hateful enemies to their gods. And now it was that St. Polycarp, after a long and diligent discharge of his duty in his episcopal station, received his crown. So vastly wide of the mark are the later Greeks, making him, in their public offices to suffer martyrdom under the Decian persecution. Nor much nearer is that of Socrates, (however he fell into the error,) who tells us that he was martyred under Gordianus; mistakes so extravagant, that there needs no more

to confute them than to mention them. Concerning his sufferings and martyrdom, we have a full and particular relation in a letter of the church of Smyrna, written not long after his death to the church of Philomelum, (or more truly Philadelphia,) and in the nature of an encyclical epistle, to all the diocesses (*παροικίας*) of the holy catholic church; the far greatest part whereof Eusebius has inserted into his history, leaving out only the beginning and the end, though the entire epistle, together with its ancient version, or rather paraphrase, is since published by bishop Usher. It was penned by Eauristus; and afterwards (as appears by their several subscriptions at the end of it) transcribed out of Irenæus's copy by Caius, contemporary and familiar with Irenæus; out of his by one Socrates, at Corinth; and from his by Pionius, who had with great diligence found it out. A piece it is that challenges a singular esteem and reverence both for the subject matter, and the antiquity of it, with which Scaliger thinks every serious and devout mind must needs be so affected, as never to think it has enough of it; professing, for his own part, that he never met with any thing in all the history of the church, with the reading whereof he was more transported, so that he seemed no longer to be himself. Which effect that it may have upon the pious, well-disposed reader, we shall present him with this following account.

7. The persecution growing hot at Smyrna, and many having already sealed their confession with their blood, the general outcry was "away with the impious;" (or the atheists, such they generally called and accounted the Christians,) "let Polycarp be sought for." The good man was not disturbed at the news, but resolved to endure the brunt; till his friends, knowing his singular usefulness, and that our Lord had given leave to his disciples, when persecuted in one city to flee to another, prevailed with him to withdraw into a neighboring village; where, with a few companions, he continued day and night in prayer, earnestly interceding with Heaven (as aforetime it had ever been his custom) for the peace and tranquillity of all the churches in the world. Three days before his apprehension, falling at night, as he was at prayer, into a trance, he dreamed that his pillow was on fire, and burned to ashes; which when he awakened, he told his friends was a prophetic presage that he should be burned alive for the cause of Christ. In the mean time he was every where narrowly sought for; upon notice whereof his friends persuaded him to retire into another village; whither he was no sooner come, but his enemies were at hand, who seizing upon a couple of youths, (one of whom by stripes they forced to a confession,) were by them conducted to his lodging. Entering the house at evening, they perceived him to be in bed in an upper room; and though, upon notice before-hand of their coming, he might easily have saved himself by slipping into another house, yet he refused, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." Understanding his persecutors were there, he came down and saluted them with a very cheerful and gentle countenance; insomuch, that they who had not hitherto known him, wondered to behold so venerable a person, of so great age, and so grave

and composed a presence; and what needed all this stir to hunt and take this poor old man? He nothing concerned, ordered a table to be spread, and provisions to be set upon it, inviting them to partake of them, and only requesting for himself, that in the mean while he might have one hour for prayer. Leave being granted, he rose up, and betook himself to his devotions, wherein he had such mighty assistances of divine grace, that he continued praying nearly two hours together, heartily recommending to God the case of all his friends and acquaintances, whether great or little, honorable or ignoble, and the state of the catholic church throughout the world; all that heard him being astonished at it, and of them now repenting that so divine and venerable an old man should be put to death.

8. His prayer being ended, and they ready to depart, he was set upon an ass; and (it being then the great sabbath; though what that great sabbath was, learned men, I believe, will hardly agree till the coming of Elias) conducted him into the city. As they were upon the road, they were met by Herod and his father Nicetes, who indeed were the main springs of the persecution, and had put the tumult into motion. This Herod was an *irenarcha*, one of those, *ad quos tuenda publica pacis vigilantia pertinebat*, as St. Augustine describes them: their office was much the same with that of our modern justices of the peace, they being set to guard the provinces, and to secure the public peace and quietness within their several jurisdictions; to prevent and suppress riots and tumults, robberies and rapines, and to enquire into the companions and receivers of all such persons, and to transmit to the magistrates the examinations and notices which they had received of such matters. They were appointed either by the emperor himself, or the præfecti prætorio, or the decurions; and at this time the custom in the provinces of the lesser Asia was, that every city did yearly send ten of the names of their principal persons to the governor of the province, who choose out one to be the *irenarcha*, the keeper or justice of the peace. Being afterwards found grievous and troublesome to the people, they were taken away by a law of the younger Theodosius, though the office remained under another name. This office at Smyrna was at this time managed by this Herod, whom Baronius conjectures to be Herodes Atticus, a man of consular dignity, and of great learning and eloquence, and who had been tutor to the present emperor. Certain it is, that that Herod governed in the free cities of Asia, and resided sometimes at Smyrna: though it cramps the conjecture, that the name of that Herod's father was Atticus, of this Nicetes; unless we will suppose him to have had two names. But whoever he be, a great enemy he was to Polycarp, whom meeting upon the way, he took him up into his chariot, where both he and his father, by plausible insinuations, sought to undermine his constancy; asking him what great harm there was in saying, My lord the emperor, and in sacrificing, by which means he might escape. This was an unusual way of attempting the Christians; not that they made any scruple to acknowledge the emperor to be their lord, (none were so forward, so earnest to pay all due

subjection and reverence to princes,) but because they knew that the Romans, too apt to flatter the ambition of their emperors into a fondly usurped divinity, by that title usually understood God, as Tertullian tells them; in any other notion of the word, they could as freely as any call him Lord; though, as he adds, even Augustus himself modestly forbade that title to be ascribed to him.

9. St. Polycarp returned no answer to their demand, till importunately urging him, he replied, that he would not at any rate comply with their persuasions. Frustrated of the ends which they had upon him, they now lay aside the vizard of their dissembled friendship, and turn their kindness into scorn and reproaches; thrusting him out of the chariot with so much violence, that he bruised his thigh with the fall. Whereat nothing daunted, as if he had received no hurt, he cheerfully hastened on to the place of his execution, under the conduct of his guard; whither when they were come, and a confused noise and tumult was arisen, a voice came from heaven, (heard by many, but none seen who spake it,) saying, "Polycarp, be strong, and quit thyself like a man." Immediately he was brought before the public tribunal, where a great shout was made; all rejoicing that he was apprehended. The proconsul (whose name was L. Statius Quadratus,) this very year, as Aristides, the orator, who lived at this time at Smyrna, informs us, the proconsul of Asia, (as not long before he had been consul at Rome,) asked him, whether he was Polycarp; which being confessed, he began to persuade him to recant. "Regard," said he, "thy great age; swear by the genius of Cæsar; repent, and say with us, Take away the impious." These were *αὐτοῦ τοῦ αὐτοῦ*, as my authors truly observe, their usual terms and proposals to Christians, who stoutly refused to swear by the emperor's genius; upon which account the heathens generally traduced them as traitors and enemies to the state; though, to wipe of that charge, they openly professed, that though they could not swear by the fortune of the emperor, (their geni being accounted deities, whom the Christians knew to be but demons, and cast out at every turn,) yet they scrupled not to swear by the emperor's safety, a thing more august and sacred than all the geni in the world.

10. The holy martyr looking about the Stadium, and with a severe and angry countenance beholding the crowd, beckoned to them with his hand, sighed and looked up to heaven, saying, (though quite in another sense than they intended,) "Take away the impious." The proconsul still persuaded him to swear, with promise to release him; withal urging him to blaspheme Christ; for with that temptation they were wont to assault Christians, and thereby to try the sincerity of their renegados; a course which Pliny tells us he observed towards apostate Christians; though he withal confesses, that none of them that were really Christians could ever be brought to it. The motion was resented with a noble scorn, and drew from Polycarp this generous confession: "Four-score and six years I have served him, and he never did me any harm; how then shall I now blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" But nothing will satisfy a malicious misguided zeal: the proconsul still importuned him to swear by Cæsar's

genius; to whom he replied, "Since you are so vainly ambitious that I should swear by the emperor's genius, as you call it, as if you knew not who I am; hear my free confession: I am a Christian. If you have a mind to learn the Christian religion, appoint me a time, and I will instruct you in it." The proconsul advised him to persuade the people: he answered, "To you I rather choose to address my discourse; for we are commanded by the laws of our religion, to give to princes and the powers ordained by God, all that due honor and reverence that is not prejudicial and contrary to the precepts of religion. As for them, (meaning the common herd,) I think them not competent judges, to whom I should apologize, or give an account of my faith."

11. The proconsul now saw it was in vain to use any further persuasives and entreaties; and therefore betook himself to severer arguments. "I have wild beasts at hand," said he, "to which I will cast thee, unless thou recant." "Call for them," cried the martyr, "for we are immutably resolved not to change the better for the worse; accounting it fit and comely only to turn from vice to virtue." "Since thou makest so light of wild beasts," added the proconsul, "I have a fire that shall tame thee, unless thou repent." "Thou threatenest me with a fire," answered Polycarp, "that burns for an hour, and is presently extinct, but art ignorant, alas! of the fire of eternal damnation, and the judgment to come, reserved for the wicked in the other world. But why delayest thou? bring forth whatever thou hast a mind to." This and much more he spake with a pleasant and cheerful confidence; and a divine grace was conspicuous in his very looks, so far was he from cowardly sinking under the great threatenings made against him. Yea, the proconsul himself was astonished at it: though finding no good could be done upon him, he commanded the crier, in the middle of the stadium, thrice to make open proclamation, (as was the manner of the Romans in all capital trials,) "Polycarp has confessed himself a Christian." Whereat the whole multitude, both of Jews and Gentiles, that were present, (and probably it is, that the common council or assembly of Asia, might about this time be held at Smyrna, for the celebration of their common shows and sports; for that it was sometimes held here, is evident from an ancient inscription making mention of it,) gave a mighty shout, crying out aloud, "this is the great doctor of Asia, and the father of the Christians; this is the destroyer of our gods, who teaches men not to do sacrifice, or worship the deities."

12. The cry being a little over, they immediately addressed themselves to Philip, the asiarch. These asiarchs were Gentile priests belonging to the commonalty of Asia, yearly chosen at the common council or assembly of Asia, to the number of about ten, (whereof one was principal,) out of the names returned by the several cities. It was an office of great honor and credit, but withal of great expense and charge; they being obliged to entertain the people with sights and sports upon the festival solemnities; and therefore it was not conferred but upon the more wealthy and substantial citizens. In this place was Philip at this time, whom the people clamorously requested to

let a lion upon the malefactor. Which he told them he could not do, having already exhibited the hunting of wild beasts with men, one of the famous shows of the amphitheatre. Then they unanimously demanded, that he might be burnt alive: a fate which he himself from the vision in his dream, had prophetically foretold should be his portion. The thing was no sooner said than done, each one striving to bear a part in this fatal tragedy, with incredible speed fetching wood and faggots from several places; but especially the Jews were peculiarly active in the service; malice to Christians being almost as natural to them as it is for the fire to burn. The fire being prepared, St. Polycarp untied his girdle, laid aside his garments, and began to put off his shoes; ministries which he before was not wont to be put to; the Christians ambitiously striving to be admitted to do them for him, and happy he that could first touch his body. So great a reverence even in his younger years had he from all for the admirable strictness and regularity of his holy life.

13. The officers that were employed in his execution having disposed all other things, came according to custom to nail him to the stake; which he desired them to omit, assuring them, that he who gave him strength to endure the fire, would enable him, without nailing, to stand immovable in the hottest flames. So they only tied him, who standing like a sheep ready for the slaughter, designed as a grateful sacrifice to the Almighty, clasping his hands, which were bound behind him, he poured out his soul to heaven in this following prayer: "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of thy well-beloved and ever-blessed Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee; the God of angels, powers, and of every creature, and of the whole race of the righteous, who live before thee; I bless thee that thou hast graciously condescended to bring me to this day and hour, that I may receive a portion in the number of thy holy martyrs, and drink of Christ's cup, for the resurrection to eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorruptibleness of the Holy Spirit. Into which number grant I may be received this day; being found in thy sight as a fair and acceptable sacrifice, such a one as thou thyself hast prepared; that so thou mayest accomplish what thou, O true and faithful God, hast foreshewn. Wherefore, I praise thee for all thy mercies. I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal High-Priest, thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ; with whom to thyself and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and for ever, Amen." Which last words he pronounced with a more clear, audible voice; and having done his prayer, the ministers of execution blew up the fire, which increasing to a mighty flame, behold a wonder, (seen, say my authors, by us, who were purposely reserved, that we might declare it to others,) the flames disposing themselves into the resemblance of an arch, like the sails of a ship swelled with the wind, gently encircled the body of the martyr, who stood all the while in the midst, not like roasted flesh, but like gold or silver purified in the furnace; his body sending forth a delightful fragrant, which like frankincense, or some other costly spices, presented itself to our senses.

14. How blind and incorrigibly obstinate is un-

belief! The infidels were so far from being convinced, that they were rather exasperated by the miracle; commanding a spearman, one of those who were wont to despatch wild beasts when they became outrageous, to go near and run him through with a sword; which he had no sooner done, but such a vast quantity of blood flowed from the wound, as extinguished and put out the fire; together with which a dove was seen to fly from the wounds of his body, which some suppose to have been his soul, clothed in a visible shape at the time of its departure; though true it is, that this circumstance is not mentioned in Eusebius's account, and probably never was in the original. Nor did the malice of Satan end here; he knew by the innocent and unblameable course of his life, and the glorious constancy of his martyrdom, that he had certainly attained the crown of immortality, and nothing now was left for his spite to work on, but to deprive them even of the honor of his bones. For many were desirous to have given his body decent and honorable burial, and to have assembled there for the celebration of his memory; but were prevented by some who prompted Nicetes, the father of Herod, and brother to Alce, to advise the proconsul not to bestow his body upon the Christians; lest having their crucified master, they should henceforth worship Polycarpus. A suggestion however managed by the heathens, yet first contrived and prompted by the Jews, who narrowly watched the Christians when they would have taken away his body from the place of execution; "little considering (they are the words of my authors) how impossible it is that either we should forsake Christ, who died for the salvation of the whole world, or that we should worship any other. Him we adore as the Son of God; but martyrs, as the disciples and followers of our Lord, we deservedly love for their eminent kindness towards their own prince and master, whose companions and fellow-disciples we also by all means desire to be." So far were those primitive and better ages from that undue and superstitious veneration of the relics of martyrs and departed saints, which after ages introduced into the church, as elsewhere we have shown more at large.

15. The centurion beholding the perverseness and obstinacy of the Jews, commanded the body to be placed in the midst, and in the usual manner to be burned to ashes; whose bones the Christians gathered up as a choice and inestimable treasure, and decently interred them. In which place they resolved, if possible, (and they prayed God nothing might hinder it,) to meet and celebrate the birth-day of his martyrdom; both to do honor to the memory of the departed, and to prepare and encourage others hereafter to give the like testimony to the faith. Both which considerations gave birth and original to the *Memorie Martyrum*, those solemn anniversary commemorations of the martyrs, which we have in another place more fully shown, were generally kept in the primitive church. Thus died this apostolical man, ann. Chr. 167, about the hundredth year of his age; for those eighty-six years, which himself speaks of, wherein he had served Christ, cannot be said to commence from his birth, but from his baptism or new-birth, at which time we cannot

well suppose him to have been less than sixteen or twenty years old: besides his converse with the apostles and consecration by St. John, reasonably suppose him of some competent years; for we cannot think he would ordain a youth, or a very young man, bishop, especially of so great and populous a city. The incomparable primate, from a passage in his epistle, conjectures him to have lived (though not then converted to Christianity) at the time when St. Paul wrote his epistles; which if so, must argue him to have been of a greater age. Nor is this any more improbable than that Quadratus, the Christian apologist, who lived under Hadrian, and dedicated his *Apologetic* to that emperor, reports; that there were some of those whom our Lord had healed, and raised from the dead, alive even in his time. And of Simeon, successor to St. James in the bishopric of Jerusalem, Hegesippus expressly relates that he was a hundred and twenty years old at the time of his martyrdom. Sure I am Irenæus particularly notes, of our St. Polycarp, that he lived a very long time, and was arrived to an exceeding great age, when he underwent a most glorious and illustrious martyrdom for the faith.

16. He suffered on the second of the month Xanthicus, the seventh of the kalends of May; though whether mistaken for the seventh of the kalends of April, and so to be referred to March 26, as some will have it, or for the seventh of the kalends of March, and so to be adjudged to February 23, as others, is difficult to determine. It shall suffice to note, that his memory is celebrated by the Greek church, February 23; by the Latin, January 26. The amphitheatre where he suffered is in a great measure yet remaining; (as a late eye-witness and diligent searcher into antiquity informs us;) in the two opposite sides whereof are the dens where the lions were wont to be kept. His tomb is in a little chapel, in the side of a mountain, on the south-east part of the city, solemnly visited by the Greeks upon his festival day; and for the maintenance and reparation whereof, travellers were wont to throw in a few aspers into an earthen pot that stands there for that purpose. How miserable the state of this city is under the Turkish yoke at this day, is without the limits of my business to inquire. To look a little higher to the times we write of, though I love not to make severe and ill-natured interpretations of the actions of divine Providence, yet I cannot but observe, how heavy the divine displeasure, not long after Polycarp's death fell, as upon other places, so more particularly upon this city, by plague, fire, and earthquakes, mentioned by others, but more fully described by Aristides their own orator, who was contemporary with St. Polycarp. By which means their city, before one of the glories and ornaments of Asia, was turned into rubbish and ashes, their stately houses overturned, their temples ruined; one especially, which as it advanced Asia above other countries, so gave Smyrna the honor and precedence above other cities of Asia; their traffic spoiled, their marts and ports laid waste, besides the great numbers of people that lost their lives. Indeed the fate so sad, that the orator was forced to give over, professing himself unable to describe it.

17. I cannot better close the story of Polycarp's

martyrdom, than with the preface which the church of Smyrna has in the beginning of it, as what eminently represents the illustrious faith and patience of those primitive Christians. "Evident it is, (say they,) that all those martyrdoms are great and blessed, which happen by the will of God; for it becomes us Christians, who have a more divine religion than others, to ascribe to God the sovereign dispose of all events. Who would not stand and admire the generous greatness of their mind, their singular patience, and admirable love to God? who, when their flesh was with scourges so torn off their backs, that the whole frame and contexture of their bodies, even to their innermost veins and arteries, might be seen, yet patiently endured it: insomuch that those who were present, pitied and grieved at the sight of it, while they themselves were endued with so invincible a resolution, that none of them gave one sigh or groan; the holy martyrs of Christ letting us see, that at that time, when they were thus tormented, they were strangers to their own bodies; or rather that our Lord stood by them to assist and comfort them. Animated by the grace of Christ, they despised the torments of men, by one short hour delivering themselves from eternal miseries. The fire which their tormentors put to them seemed cool and little, while they had it in their eye to avoid the everlasting and unextinguishable flames of another world; their thoughts being fixed upon those rewards which are prepared for them that endure to the end, such as "neither ear hath heard, nor eye hath seen, nor hath it entered into the heart of man;" but which were shown to them by our Lord, as being now no longer mortals, but entering upon the state of angels. In like manner those who were condemned to be devoured by wild beasts, for a long time endured the most grievous tortures: shells of fishes were strewed under their naked bodies, and they forced to lie upon sharp-pointed stakes driven into the ground, and several such-like engines of torture devised for them, that, (if possible,) by the constancy of their torments, the enemy might drive them to renounce the faith of Christ. Various were the methods of punishment which the devil did invent; though, blessed be God, there were not many whom they were able to prevail upon." And, at the end of the epistle, they particularly remark concerning Polycarp, that he was not only a famous doctor, but an eminent martyr; whose martyrdom all strove to imitate, as one who by his patience conquered an unrighteous judge; and by that means having attained an immortal crown, was triumphing with the apostles, and all the souls of the righteous, glorifying God the Father, and praising of our Lord, the disposer of our bodies, and the bishop and pastor of the catholic church throughout the world. Nor were the Christians the only persons that revered his memory, but the very Gentiles (as Eusebius tells) everywhere spoke honorably of him.

18. As for his writings, besides that St. Jerome mentions the volumes of Papias and Polycarp, and the above-mentioned Pionius's epistles and homilies, Irenæus evidently intimates that he wrote several epistles; of all which none are extant at this day, but the Epistle to the Philippians, an epistle peculiarly celebrated by the ancients, very

useful, says St. Jerome, *navv Savpasn*, (as Suidas and Sophronius style it,) a most admirable epistle. Irenæus gives it this eulogium, that it is a most perfect and absolute epistle, whence they that are careful of their salvation may learn the character of his faith, and the truth which he preached. To which Eusebius adds, that in this epistle he makes use of some quotations out of the first Epistle of St. Peter. An observation that holds good with the epistle, as we have it at this day, there being many places in it cited out of the first, not one out of the second epistle. Photius passed this just and true judgment of it, that it is full of many admonitions, delivered with clearness and simplicity, according to the ecclesiastical way and manner of interpretation. It seems to hold a great affinity, both in style and substance, with Clemens's Epistle to the Corinthians; often suggesting the same rules, and making use of the same words and phrases; so that it is not to be doubted but he had that excellent epistle particularly in his eye at the writing of it. Indeed it is a pious and truly Christian epistle, furnished with short and useful precepts and rules of life, and penned with the modesty and simplicity of the apostolic times; valued by the ancients next to the writings of the holy canon: and St. Jerome tells us, that even in his time it was read in *Asia conventu*, in the public assemblies of the Asian church. It was first published in Greek by P. Halloix, the Jesuit, ann. 1633, and not many years after by bishop Usher: and I presume the pious reader will think it no unuseful digression, if I here subjoin so venerable a monument of the ancient church.

THE EPISTLE.

Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him, to the church of God which is at Philippi: mercy unto you, and peace from God Almighty, and Jesus Christ our Saviour, be multiplied.

1. I REJOICED with you greatly in our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye entertained the patterns of true love, and (as became you) conducted onwards those who were bound with chains, which are the ornaments of saints, and the crowns of those that are the truly elect of God, and of our Lord: and that the firm root of your faith, formerly published, does yet remain, and bring forth fruit in our Lord Jesus Christ, who was pleased to offer up himself even unto death for our sins: "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death:"* "in whom, though you see him not, ye believe, and believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;"† whereinto many desire to enter, knowing that "by grace ye are saved, not by works, but by the will of God through Jesus Christ."‡

2. "Wherefore, girding up your loins,"|| serve God in fear and truth, forsaking empty and vain talking, and the error wherein so many are involved, believing in him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave him glory,"§ and a

* Acts ii. 24.

|| 1 Pet. i. 13.

† 1 Pet. i. 8.

§ 1 Pet. i. 21.

‡ Eph. ii. 8.

throne at his right hand ; to whom all things, both in heaven and in earth, are put in subjection, whom every thing that has breath worships, who comes to judge the quick and the dead, whose blood God will require of them that believe not in him. But he who raised him up from the dead, will raise up us also, if we do his will, and walk in his commandments, and love what he loved, abstaining from all unrighteousness, inordinate desire, covetousness, detraction, false witness ; “ not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.”* or striking for striking, or cursing for cursing ; but remembering what the Lord said when he taught thus, “ Judge not, that ye be not judged ; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven ; be merciful, that ye may obtain mercy : with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”† And that “ Blessed are the poor, and they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of God.”‡

3. These things, brethren, I write to you concerning righteousness, not of my own humor, but because yourselves did provoke me to it. For neither I, nor any other such as I am, can attain to the wisdom of blessed and glorious St. Paul ; who being among you, and conversing personally with those who were then alive, firmly and accurately taught the word of truth ; and when absent, wrote epistles to you, by which, if you look into them, ye may be built in the faith delivered unto you, which is the mother of us all, being followed by hope, and led on by love, both towards God and Christ, and to our neighbor. For whoever is inwardly replenished with these things, has fulfilled the law of righteousness ; and he that is furnished with love, stands at a distance from all sin. But love of money is the beginning of all evil.—Knowing therefore that “ we brought nothing into the world, and that we shall carry nothing out,”|| let us arm ourselves with the armor of righteousness ; and in the first place be instructed ourselves to walk in the commands of the Lord, and next teach your wives to live in the faith delivered to them, in love, and chastity ; that they embrace their own husbands with all integrity, and others also with all temperance and continency ; and that they educate and discipline their children in the fear of God. The widows, that they be sober and modest concerning the faith of the Lord ; that they incessantly intercede for all, and keep themselves from all slandering, detraction, false witness, covetousness, and every evil work ; as knowing that they are the altars of God, and that he accurately surveys the sacrifice, and that nothing can be concealed from him, neither of our reasonings, nor thoughts, nor the secrets of the heart. Accordingly, knowing that God is not mocked, we ought to walk worthy of his command, and of his glory.

4. Likewise let the deacons be unblamable before his righteous presence, as the ministers of God in Christ, and not of men ; not accusers, not double-tongued, not covetous, but temperate in all things ; compassionate, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who became the deacon or servant of all : of whom, if we be careful

to please him in this world, we shall receive the reward of the other life, according as he has promised to raise us from the dead ; and if we walk worthy of him, “ we believe that we shall also reign with him.” Let the young men also be unblamable in all things, studying in the first place to be chaste, and to restrain themselves from all that is evil. For it is a good thing to get above the lusts of the world, seeing every lust wars against the spirit ; and that “ neither fornicators, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind shall inherit the kingdom of God,”* nor whoever commits base things.

5. Wherefore it is necessary that ye abstain from all these things, being subject to the presbyters and deacons, as to God and Christ. That the virgins also walk with a chaste and undefiled conscience. Let the presbyters be tender and merciful, compassionate towards all, reducing those that are in error, visiting all that are weak ; not negligent of the widow and the orphan, and him that is poor, but ever providing what is honest in the sight of God and men ; abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unrighteous judgment ; being far from covetousness, not hastily believing a report against any man, nor rigid in judgment ; knowing that we are all faulty, and obnoxious to punishment. If therefore we stand in need to pray the Lord that he would forgive us, we ourselves ought also to forgive. For we are before the eyes of him who is Lord and God, and “ all must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and every one give an account of himself.”† Wherefore let us serve him with all fear and reverence, as he himself has commanded us, and as the apostles have preached and taught us, and the prophets who foreshadowed the coming of our Lord. Be zealous of that which is good, abstaining from offences and false brethren, and those who bear the name of the Lord in hypocrisy, who seduce and deceive vain men ; for “ every one that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is anti-Christ ;”‡ and he who doth not acknowledge the martyrdom of the cross, is of the devil ; and whoever shall pervert the oracles of the Lord to his private lusts, and shall say, that there is neither resurrection nor judgment to come, that man is the first-born of Satan. Leaving therefore the vanity of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to that doctrine that from the beginning was delivered to us : let us be watchful in prayers, persevering in fasting and supplications, beseeching the all-seeing God that he would not lead us into temptation ; as the Lord has said, “ the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.”|| Let us unweariedly and constantly adhere to Jesus Christ, who is our hope and the pledge of our righteousness, “ who bare our sins in his own body on the tree, who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,”¶ but endured all things for our sakes, that we might live through him. Let us, then, imitate his patience, and if we suffer for his name, we glorify him ; for such a pattern he set us in himself, and thus we have believed and entertained.

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

† Rom. xiv. 9, 10.

‡ 1 John iv. 3 ; 2 Epist. v. 7.

|| Matt. xxvi. 41.

¶ 1 Pet. ii. 22, 24.

* 1 Pet. iii. 9. † Matt. vii. 1 ; Luke vi. 36, 38.

‡ Matt. v. 3, 10. || 1 Tim. vi. 7.

6. I exhort you, therefore, all, that ye be obedient to the word of righteousness, and that you exercise all manner of patience, as you have seen it set forth before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius, and Zosimus, and Rufus; but in others also among you, and in Paul himself, and the rest of the apostles; being assured that all these have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness; and are arrived at the place due and promised to them by the Lord, of whose sufferings they were made partakers. For they loved not this present world, but him who both died and was raised up again by God for us. Stand fast, therefore, in these things, and follow the example of the Lord; being firm and immutable in the faith, lovers of the brethren, and kindly affectionate one towards another, united in the truth, carrying yourselves meekly to each other, despising no man. When it is in your power to do good, defer it not, for alms delivereth from death. Be all of you subject one to another, having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that both you yourselves may receive praise by your good works, and that God be not blasphemed through you. For we unto him by whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed. Wherefore teach all men sobriety, and be yourselves conversant in it.

7. I am exceedingly troubled for Valens, who was sometimes ordained a presbyter among you, that he so little understands the place wherein he was set. I therefore warn you, that you abstain from covetousness, and that ye be chaste and true. Keep yourselves from every evil work. But he that in these things cannot govern himself, how shall he preach it to another? If a man refrain not from covetousness, he will be defiled with idolatry, and shall be judged among the heathen. Who is ignorant of the judgment of the Lord? "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"* as Paul teaches. But I have neither found any such thing in you, nor heard any such thing of you, among whom the blessed Paul labored, and who are in the beginning of his epistle. For of you he boasts in all those churches, which only knew God at that time, whom as yet we had not known. I am, therefore, brethren, greatly

troubled for him and for his wife; the Lord give them true repentance. Be ye also sober as to this matter, and account not such as enemies, but restore them as weak and erring members, that the whole body of you may be saved; for in so doing ye build up yourselves.

8. I trust that ye are well exercised in the holy Scriptures, and that nothing is hid from you; a thing as yet not granted to me. As it is said in these places, "be angry and not sin;" and "let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Blessed is he that is mindful of these things, which I believe you are. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ Jesus the eternal High-priest and Son of God, build you up in faith and truth, and in all meekness, that you may be without anger, in patience, forbearance, long-suffering, and chastity, and give you a portion and inheritance amongst his saints: and to us together with you, and to all under heaven, who shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Father, who raised him from the dead. Pray for all saints: pray also for kings, magistrates, and princes, and even for them that hate and persecute you, and for the enemies of the cross, that your fruits may be manifest in all, that you may be complete in him.

9. Ye wrote unto me, both ye and Ignatius, that if any one go into Syria, he might carry your letters along with him: which I will do so soon as I shall have a convenient opportunity, either myself, or by some other, whom I will send upon your errand. According to your request, we have sent you those epistles of Ignatius which he wrote to us, and as many others of his as we had by us, which are annexed to this epistle, by which ye may be greatly profited. For they contain in them faith and patience, and whatever else is necessary to build you up in our Lord. Send us word what you certainly know both concerning Ignatius himself and his companions. These things have I written unto you by Crescens, whom I have hitherto commended to you, and do still recommend.—For he has unblamably conversed amongst us, as also I believe amongst you. His sister also ye shall have recommended, when she shall come unto you. Be ye safe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with you all. Amen.

* 1 Cor. vi. 2.

REMAINS

OF THE

REV. RICHARD CECIL, M. A.

LATE RECTOR OF BISLEY, AND VICAR OF CHOBHAM, SURREY; AND
MINISTER OF ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW, LONDON.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A VIEW OF HIS CHARACTER.

BY JOSIAH PRATT, B. D. F. A. S.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

"HE that has the happy talent of parlor-preaching," says Dr. Watts,* "has sometimes done more for Christ and souls in the space of a few minutes, than by the labor of many hours and days in the usual course of preaching in the pulpit."

On my first intercourse with Mr. Cecil, now upwards of fifteen years since, when in the full vigor of his mind, I was so struck with the wisdom and originality of his remarks, that I considered it my duty to record what seemed to me most likely to be useful to others.

It should be observed, that Mr. Cecil is made to speak often of himself: and, to persons who do not consider the circumstances of the case, there may appear much egotism in the quantity of such remarks here put together, and in the manner in which his things are said: but this will be treating him with the most flagrant injustice; for it must be remembered that the remarks of this nature were chiefly made by him, from time to time, in answer to my particular inquiries into his judgment and habits on certain points of doctrine or practice.

I have labored, in recording those sentiments which I have gathered from him in conversation, to preserve as much as possible his very expressions; and they who were familiar with his manner will be able to judge, in general, how far I have succeeded: but I would explicitly disavow an exact verbal responsibility. For the sentiments I make myself answerable.

In some instances, I have brought together observations made at different times; the reader is not, therefore, to understand that the thoughts here collected on any subject always followed in immediate connexion.

* An Humble Attempt towards the Revival of Religion, Part I, Sect. 4.

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VIEW OF THE CHARACTER

OF THE

REV. RICHARD CECIL.

In depicting the PERSONAL and MINISTERIAL character of my departed friend, while I shall communicate occasionally the impressions made by him on my own mind, most of which were recorded at the time they were made, I shall endeavor to render him, as much as possible, the portrayer of his own character, by detailing those descriptions of his views and feelings which I gathered from him.

NATURE, EDUCATION, and GRACE, combine to form and model the PERSONAL CHARACTER of every Christian. God gives to his reasonable creature such physical and intellectual constitution as he pleases; education and circumstances hide or unfold, restrain or mature this constitution; and grace, while it regulates and sanctifies the powers of the man, varies its own appearances according to the varieties of those powers. And it is by the endless modifications and counteractions of these principles, that the personal character of a Christian is formed.

It might have been expected, from Mr. Cecil's earliest displays of character, that he was formed to be an instrument of extensive evil or of eminent good. There was a DECISION—a DARING—an UNTAMEABLENESS in the structure of his mind, even when a boy, combined with a tone of authority and command, and a talent in the exercise of these qualities, to which the minds of his associates yielded an implicit subjection. Fear of consequences never entered into his view. Opposition, especially if accompanied by any thing like severity or oppression, awakened unrelenting resistance.

Yet this bold and untameable spirit was allied to a NOBLE and GENEROUS disposition. There was a magnificence in his mind. While he was scrupulously delicate, perhaps even to some excess, on subjects intrusted to his secrecy, and on affairs in progress; yet he would never lend himself, in his own concerns, or in those of other persons, to any thing that bordered on artifice and manœuvre; for he had a native and thorough contempt of whatever was mean, little, and equivocating. That "honesty is the best policy" may be a strong,

or the prevailing motive for uprightness, with men of a lower tone of character; but I question if it at all entered into calculation with my great friend. His mind was too noble to have recourse to other means, or to aim at other ends, than those which he avowed; and too intrepid not to avow those which he did entertain, so far as might be required or expedient.

His temptations were to the sins of the spirit, rather than to those of the flesh; and he possessed, all his life long, a superiority to the pleasures of mere sense not often seen. He was, indeed, TEMPERATE in all things—holding his bodily appetites in entire subjection.

SYMPATHY WITH SUFFERING was an eminent characteristic of Mr. Cecil's mind—a sympathy which sprung less from that softness and sensibility which are the ornament of the female, than from the generosity of his disposition. He would have had all men happy. It gratified his generous nature to ease the burdens of suffering man. If any were afflicted by the visitations of God, he taught them to bow with submission, while he pitied and relieved; if the affliction were the natural and evident fruit of crimes, he admonished while he sympathized; if the sufferings of man or brute arose from the voluntary inflictions of others, he was indignant against the oppressor.

Such was the intrepid and noble, yet humane mind, which was trained by Divine Grace, under a long course of moral discipline, for eminent usefulness in the church of God. Mr. Cecil's intellectual endowments will be spoken of hereafter. At present, I shall trace the rise and the advances of his Christian character.

He had early religious impressions. These were first received from Janeway's "Token for Children," which his mother gave him when he was about six years of age. "I was much affected by this book," said he, "and recollect that I wept, and got into a corner, where I prayed that I also might have 'an interest in Christ,' like one of the children there mentioned, though I did not then know what the expression meant."

Those impressions of his childhood wore away. He fell into the follies and vices of youth; and by degrees began to listen to infidel principles, till he avowed himself openly an unbeliever. He has alluded frequently in his writings to this criminal part of his history; but I shall add some paragraphs on this point partly in his own words.

He was suffered to proceed to awful lengths in infidelity. The natural daring of his mind allowed him to do nothing by halves. Into whatever society he enlisted himself, he was its leader. He became even an apostle of infidelity—anxious to banish the scruples of more cautious minds, and to carry them all lengths with his own. And he was too successful. In after-life he has met more than one of these converts, who have laughed at all his affectionate and earnest attempts to pull down the fabric erected too much by his own hands.

Yet he was never wholly sincere in his infidelity. He has left a most impressive and encouraging testimony to the power of parental influence in preserving his mind, under the grace of God, from entirely believing his own lie.* He gave me a farther instance of the power of conscience in this respect:

"When I was sunk in the depths of infidelity, I was afraid to read any author who treated Christianity in a dispassionate, wise, and searching manner. He made me uneasy. Conscience would gather strength. I found it more difficult to stifle her remonstrances. He would recall early instructions and impressions, while my happiness could only consist with their obliteration."

Yet he appears to have taken no small pains to rid himself of his scruples:—"I have read," said he, "all the most acute and learned and serious infidel writers, and have been really surprised at their poverty. The process of my mind has been such on the subject of revelation, that I have often thought Satan has done more for me than for the best of them; for I have had, and could have produced, arguments, that appeared to me far more weighty than any I ever found in them against Revelation."

He did not proceed in this career of sin without occasional checks of conscience. Take the following instance:

"My father had a religious servant. I frequently cursed and reviled him. He would only smile on me. That went to my heart. I felt that he looked on me as a deluded creature. I felt that he thought he had something which I knew not how to value, and that he was therefore greatly my superior. I felt there was a real dignity in his conduct. It made me appear little even in my own eyes. If he had condescended to argue with me, I could have cut some figure; at least by comparison, wretched as it would have been. He drew me once to hear Mr. Whitefield. I was 17 or 18 years old. It had no sort of religious

effect on me, nor had the preaching of any man in my unconverted state. My religion began in contemplation. Yet I conceived a high reverence for Mr. Whitefield. I no longer thought of him as the "Dr. Squintum" we were accustomed to buffoon at school. I saw a commanding and irresistible effect, and he made me feel my own insignificance."

For this daring offender, however, God had mercy in reserve! He was the child of many tears, instructions, admonitions, and prayers; and, though now a prodigal, he was to be recovered from his wickedness!

While under the control of bad principles, he gave in to every species of licentiousness—saving that, even then, the native nobleness of his mind made him despise whatever he thought mean and dishonorable. Into this state of slavery he was brought by his sin; but here the mercy of God taught him some most important lessons, which influenced his views and governed his ministry through after-life, and the same mercy then rescued him from the slavery to which he had submitted. The penetration and grandeur of his mind, with his natural superiority to sensual pleasures, made him feel the littleness of every object which engages the ambition and the desires of the carnal man; insomuch that God had given him, in this unusual way of bringing him to himself, a thorough disgust of the world, before he had gained any hold of higher objects and better pleasures.

It was thus that God prepared him for further communications of mercy. And here he felt the advantage of having been connected with sincere Christians. He knew them to be holy, and he felt that they were happy. "It was one of the first things," said he, "which struck my mind in a profligate state, that, in spite of all the folly, and hypocrisy, and fanaticism which may be seen among religious professors, there was a mind after Christ, a holiness, a heavenliness among real Christians." He added on another occasion, "My first convictions on the subject of religion were confirmed from observing that really religious persons had some solid happiness among them, which I had felt that the vanities of the world could not give. I shall never forget standing by the bed of my sick mother. 'Are not you afraid to die?' I asked her: 'No.' 'No! Why does the uncertainty of another state give you no concern?' 'Because God has said to me, *Fear not, when thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.*' The remembrance of this scene has oftentimes since drawn an ardent prayer from me, that I might die the death of the righteous."

His mind opened very gradually to the truths of the Gospel; and the process through which he was led is a striking evidence of the imminence of his past danger. "My feelings," he said, "when I was first beginning to recover from my infidelity, prove that I had been suffered to go great lengths; and, to a very awful degree, to believe my own lie. My mind revolted from Christianity. God did not bring

* See Remains: on the Influence of the Parental Character.

me to himself by any of the peculiar motives of the Gospel. When I was about twenty years old, I became utterly sick of the vanity, and disgusted with the folly, of the world. I had no thought of Jesus Christ, or of redemption. The very notion of Jesus Christ or of redemption repelled me. I could not endure a system so degrading. I thought there might possibly be a Supreme Being; and if there were such a Being, he might hear me when I prayed. To worship the Supreme Being seemed somewhat dignified. There was something grand and elevating in the idea. But the whole scheme and plan of redemption appeared mean, and degrading, and dishonorable to man. The New Testament, in its sentiments and institutions, repelled me; and seemed impossible to be believed, as a religion suitable to man."

The grace of God triumphed, however, over all opposition. The religion which began in this disgust with the world and disaffection to the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, made rapid advances in his mind. The seed sown in tears by his inestimable mother, though long buried, now burst into life, and shot forth with vigor; and he became a preacher of that truth, which once he labored to destroy. Yet grace did not annihilate the natural character and qualities of the mind; though it regulated and directed them. The Christian's feelings and experience were modified by the constitution of the man. After a long course of spiritual watchfulness and warfare, he spoke thus of himself:

"There is what Bacon calls a DRY LIGHT, in which subjects are viewed, without any predilection, or passion, or emotion, but simply as they exist. This is very much my character as a Christian. I have great constitutional resistance. Tell me such a thing is my duty—I know it is, but there I stop. Talk to me of HELL—my heart would rise with a sort of daring stubbornness. There is a constitutional desperation about me, which was the most conspicuous feature in my character when young, and which has risen up against the gracious measures which God has all my life taken to subdue and break it. I feel I can do little in religion without ENCOURAGEMENT. I am persuaded and satisfied, tied and bound, by its truth and importance and value; but I view the subject in a DRY LIGHT. A strong sense of DIVINE FRIENDSHIP goes a vast way with me. When I fall, God will raise me. When I want, God will provide. When I am in perplexity, God will deliver. He cares for me—pities me—bears with me—guides me—loves me!"

But the energy of Divine Grace was most conspicuous in the control and mastery of this resisting and high spirit of which our friend complained. Nay, if there were any one Christian virtue in which he was more advanced than any other, it appears to me to have been HUMILITY—not that humility which debases itself that it may be exalted, and which is offended if its professions be believed; but the humility which arose from an

abiding and growing conviction of his infinite distance from the standard of perfection, and the little comparative use which he had made of his many means and helps in approaching that standard—a humility that expressed itself, therefore, in a teachableness of mind,* a ready acknowledgment of excellence in others, and a candor in judging of other persons which are seldom equalled, and which were rare endowments in a mind that could not but feel its own powers, and its superiority to that of most other men. But God has a thousand unseen methods of forming and cherishing those graces in his servants, which seem most opposed to their constitution, and least to be expected in their circumstances.

Mr. Cecil gave me one day the following remarkable illustration of this subject in his own case:—"It is a nice question in casuistry:—*How far a man may feel complacency in the exercise of talent.* A hawk exults on his wing; he skims and sails, delighting in the consciousness of his powers. I know nothing of this feeling. DISSATISFACTION accompanies me, in the study and in the pulpit. I never made a sermon with which I felt satisfied; I never preached a sermon, with which I felt satisfied. I have always present to my mind such a conception of what might be done, and I sometimes hear the thing so done, that what I do falls very far beneath what it seems to me it should be. Some sermons which I have heard have made me sick of my own for a month afterwards. Many ministers have no conception of any thing beyond their own world: they compare themselves only with themselves; and perhaps they must do so: if I could give them my views of their ministry, without changing the men, they would be ruined; while now, they are eminent instruments in God's hands. But some men see too much beyond themselves for their own comfort. Perhaps complacency in the exercise of talent, be it what it may, is hardly to be separated, in such a wretched heart as man's, from pride. It seems to me that this dissatisfaction with myself, is the messenger sent to buffet me and keep me down. In other men, the separation between complacency and pride may be possible; but I scarcely think it is so in me."†

* "A friend, who knew him for thirty or forty years, has informed me," says Mr. Wilson, in the sermons preached on occasion of Mr. Cecil's death, "that he was more ready to hear of his faults from persons whom he esteemed, than most men. When any failings were pointed out to him, he usually thanked the reprover, and anxiously inquired for further admonitions. I have observed myself, that, when he gave advice, which he did with acuteness and decision, he was quite superior to that little vanity which is offended if the counsel be not followed."

† Mr. Churton has a remark on Dr. Johnson, somewhat of a similar nature to this of Mr. C. on himself. He thinks that "Johnson's morbid melancholy and constitutional infirmities were intended by Providence, like St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, to check intellectual conceit and arrogance; which the consciousness of his extraordinary talents, awake as he was to the voice of praise, might otherwise have generated in a very cul-

I have alluded to Mr. Cecil's **READY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE WORTH OF OTHERS**; and I must add, that he cultivated that discrimination of excellence, which leads a man to discover and esteem it in the midst of imperfections. He had an unfeigned regard to real worth, wherever it was found. The powers of the understanding have often fascinated men of inferior wisdom, and lessened the odiousness of an immoral state of heart too plainly seen in others; but if the excellencies of the head and the heart must be disjoined, he never failed to value that which is most truly valuable. He would say—"Such a friend of ours is what many men look down on, as a weak man; but I honor his wisdom and his devotedness. He throws himself out, and all the powers which God has given him, into the service of his Master, in all those ways which seem to him best; and, though perhaps he and I should forever differ on the best way, and though I see in him many peculiarities and weaknesses, yet I honor and love the man; I revere his simplicity and his piety. He is what God has made him; and all that he is he puts into action for God." If Mr. Cecil was at any time severe in his remarks on others, his severity was chiefly directed against that ignorant vanity and affectation, which push a man forward where great men would retire, and which make him dogmatical where wise men would speak with humility and candor.

Closely allied with his humility, was that **OPENNESS TO CONVICTION**, which Mr. Cecil possessed in an unusual degree. He had dived so deeply into his own heart, and had read man so accurately—his short-sightedness, his scanty span, his pride, and his passions—that he was, more than most men, superior to that little feeling which makes us quit the scholar's form. Many men speak of themselves and of all around them as in a state of pupillage and childhood, but I never approached a man on whose mind this conviction had a more real and practical influence.

DISINTERESTEDNESS was a pre-eminent characteristic of Mr. Cecil as a Christian. His whole spirit and conduct spoke one language: "Let me and mine be nothing, so that thy kingdom may come!" His disinterestedness was grounded on his conviction of the absolute nothingness of all earthly good, compared with the glory of Christ and the interests of his kingdom. In all pecuniary transactions of a private or public nature, he was governed by this principle; and made a free and cheerful sacrifice of what he might have lawfully obtained, if he thought his receiving it would impede his usefulness.

On one occasion of this nature, he explained the noble principle on which he acted:—"A Christian is called to refrain from some things, which, though actually right, yet will not bear a good appearance to all men. I once judged it my duty to refuse a considerable sum of money, which I might lawfully and fairly have

received, because I considered that my account of the matter could not be stated to some, to whom a different representation would be made. A man who intends to stand immaculate, and, like Samuel, to come forward and say—*Whose ox, or whose ass have I taken?* must count the cost. I knew that my character was worth more to me than this sum of money. By probity, a man honors himself. It is the part of a wise man to waive the present good for the future increase. A merchant suffers a large quantity of goods to go out of the kingdom to a foreign land, but he has his object in doing so; he knows, by calculation, that he shall make so much more advantage by them. A Christian is made a wise man by counting the cost. The best picture I know of the exercise of this virtue, drawn by the hand of man, is that by John Bunyan in the characters of *Passion and Patience*.

Associated with this disinterestedness of spirit, was a singular **PRACTICAL RELIANCE ON PROVIDENCE**, in all the most minute and seemingly indifferent affairs of his life. He was emphatically, to use his own expression, "a pupil of signs"—waiting for and following the leadings and openings of divine Providence in his affairs. I once consulted him throughout a very delicate and perplexing affair. In one stage of it, he said to me, "You have not done this thing exactly as I should have felt my mind led to do it. I feel myself in such cases like a child in the middle of an intricate and perplexed wood. Two considerations weigh with me: first—If I could see all the involutions, and relations, and bearings, and consequences of the affair, then I might feel myself able to move forward: but secondly—I know not one of them, not even the shadow of one, nay, hardly the probability of such and such issues. Then I am driven to simple reliance. I have never found God fail me in such cases. When I am utterly lost and confounded, I look for openings, clear and evident to my own conviction. I have a warrant for all this. Our grand danger with reference to Providence is, that we should walk as men:—*Are ye not carnal and walk as men?*"

On another occasion he said—"We make too little of the subject of Providence. My mind is by nature so intrepid and sanguine, and it has so often led me to anticipate God in his guidings, to my severe loss, that perhaps I am now too suspicious and dilatory in following him. However, this is a maxim with me—that, when I am waiting with a simple, childlike spirit for openings and guidings, and imagine I perceive them, God would either prevent the semblance of them from rising up before me, if these were not his leadings in reality, or he would preserve me from deeming them such; and therefore I always follow what appears to be my duty without hesitation."

But the spring of all these Christian virtues, and the master-grace of his mind, was **FAITH**. His whole spirit and character were a living illustration of that definition of the apostle—*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the*

evidence of things unseen! He appeared to me never to be exercised with doubts and fears. His magnanimity entered most strikingly into his religious character. He was convinced and satisfied by all the divine declarations and promises—and he left himself, with unsuspecting confidence, in God's hands.*

I quote Mr. Wilson's testimony to the PATIENCE of our friend UNDER AFFLICTIONS. "He was not only, in opposition to all the tendencies of his natural dispositions, resigned, but cheerful under his trials. I have seen him repeatedly, at his Living in the country, return from his ride racked with pain; pale, emaciated, speechless. I have seen him throw himself all along upon his sofa, on his face, and cover his forehead with his hands; and there, without an expression of complaint, endure the paroxysm of his disorder; and I have been astonished to observe him rise up in an instant, with his wonted dignity, and enter upon conversation with cheerfulness and vigor. He has often acknowledged to me, that the anguish he felt was like a dagger plunged into his side, and that through a whole summer he has not had two nights free from tormenting pain. Such were his sufferings for ten or twelve years previous to his last illness. And yet this was the man, or rather this was the Christian, from whose lips I never heard a murmuring word."

It is almost needless to add, that Mr. Cecil possessed REMARKABLE DECISION OF CHARACTER. When he went to Oxford he had made a resolution of restricting himself to a quarter of an hour daily, in playing on the violin; on which instrument he greatly excelled, and of which he was extravagantly fond: but he found it impracticable to adhere to his determination; and had so frequently to lament the loss of time in this fascinating amusement, that with the noble spirit which characterized him through life, he cut his strings, and never afterwards replaced them. He studied for a painter; and, after he had changed his object, retained a fondness and a taste for the art: he was once called to visit a sick lady, in whose room there was a painting which so strongly attracted his notice, that he found his attention diverted from the sick person, and absorbed by the painting: from that moment he formed the resolution of mortifying a taste, which he found so intrusive, and so obstructive to him in his nobler pursuits; and determined never afterwards to frequent the exhibition.

Nor was his INTREPID and INFLEXIBLE FIRM-

* Mr. Wilson justly remarks of our friend, that "the determination and grandeur of his mind displayed his faith to peculiar advantage. This divine principle quite realized and substantiated to him the things which are *not seen and eternal*. It was absolutely like another sense. The things of time were as nothing. Every thing that came before him was referred to a spiritual standard. His one great object was fixed, and this object engrossed his whole soul. Here his foot stood immovable, as on a rock. His hold on the truths of the Scriptures was so firm, that he acted on them boldly and unreservedly. He went all lengths, and risked all consequences, on the word and promise of God."

NESS less conspicuous, whenever the interests of truth and the honor of Christ were concerned. The world in arms would not have appalled him, while the glory of Christ was in his view. Nor do I believe that he would have hesitated for a moment, after he had given to nature her just tribute of feeling and of tears, to go forth from his family, and join "the noble army of martyrs" who expired in the flames in Smithfield, had the honor of his Master called him to this sacrifice; nor would his knees have trembled, nor his look changed.

Yet, I cannot but add, that this firmness never degenerated into rudeness. He knew and observed all those decencies of life, which render mutual intercourse agreeable; and he had that ease of manner, among all classes of society, which bespoke perfect self-possession and a thorough knowledge of the world. His address in meeting the manners and habits of thinking of persons of rank, either when they were inquiring into religion or under affliction, was, perhaps, scarcely to be equalled.

The associations in our friend's mind were often of a very humorous kind. He had a strong natural turn for associations of this nature, which threw a great vivacity and charm over his familiar conversation—employed as it was, in the main, like every faculty of his mind, for useful ends. He was fully aware, however, of the danger of possessing such a faculty, and the temptations to which it exposed him; prompted and supported as it was by a buoyancy of spirits, which even great and lengthened pain could scarcely subdue. I have looked at him, and listened to him, with astonishment—when meeting, with a few other young men occasionally at his house, we have found him dejected and worn out with pain—stretched on his sofa, and declining to join in our conversation—till he caught an interest in what was passing—when the question of an inquiring or burdened conscience has roused him to an exertion of his great mind—he has risen from his sofa—he has forgot his sufferings—and he has left us nothing to do but to admire and treasure up most profound and impressive remarks on the Scripture, on the heart, and on the world.

The mention of his humor and his vivacity of spirit leads me to remark, that I am not writing a panegyric, but drawing a character. No likeness can be faithful, while the best original is such as he must be in the present state, if it carry no shades. I have no wish to conceal the shades of this extraordinary character. Sternness and levity were the two constitutional evils, which most severely exercised him. They seem to have been the necessary result, in an imperfect being, of the union of that masculine and original vigor with humor and an ardent fancy, which met in the structure of his mind. So far, indeed, had grace triumphed over these constitutional enemies, that the very opposite features were the most prominent in his character; and no one could approach him without feeling himself with a most TENDER and SERIOUS mind. I speak of those occasional ebullitions, which

tended to remind him, that, though he was invested with a new and triumphant nature, he was yet at home in the body, and subject to the recurrence of his constitutional infirmities.

Yet, though Mr. Cecil felt occasionally temptations to levity, through the buoyancy and spring of his animal spirits, his prevailing temper was of a quite opposite description. A sensibility of spirit, with his view of human nature and of the world, threw a cast of MELANCHOLY over his mind. He was far more disposed to weep over the guilt and misery of man, than to smile at his follies. "I have," said he, "a salient principle in me. My spirits never sink. Yet I have a strong dash of melancholy. It is a high and exquisite feeling. When I first awake in the morning, I could often weep with pleasure. The holy calm, the silence, the freshness, thrill through my soul. At such moments I should feel the presence of any person to be intrusion and impertinence, and common affairs, nauseous. The stillness of an empty house is paradise to me. The man who has never felt thus cannot be made to understand what I mean."

"Hooker's dying thought," he added, "is congenial to my spirit. 'I am going to leave a world disordered, and church disorganized, for a world and a church where every angel and every rank of angels stand before the throne in the very post God has assigned them.' I am obliged habitually to turn my eye from the wretched disorders of the world and the church, to the beauty, harmony, meekness, and glory of a better world."

On another occasion he said—"I have been long in the habit of viewing every thing around me as in a state of ALIENATION. I have no hold on my dearest comforts. My children must separate from me. One has his lot cast in one place, and another elsewhere. It may be my particular leaning, but I have never leaned toward my comforts without finding them give way. A sharp warning has met me—"These are aliens, and as an alien live thou among them." We may use our comforts by the way. We may take up the pitcher to drink, but the moment we begin to admire, God will in love dash it to pieces. But I feel no such alienation from the church. I am united to Christ, and to all his glorified and living members, by an indissoluble bond. Here my mind can centre and sympathize without suspicion or fear."

"I feel," he would say, "a congeniality with the character of Jeremiah. I seem to understand him. I could approach him, and feel encouraged to familiarity. It is not so with Elijah or Ezekiel. There is a rigor or severity about them which seems to repel me to a distance, and excites reverence rather than sympathy and love."

In a very interesting case on which I consulted him, he gave me a striking view of this feature in his character—"I should have fallen myself into an utterly different mode of conducting the affair. But you have not the melancholy in your constitution which I have, and therefore to look for my mode of thinking

in you, would be expecting what ought not to be expected. This is a strong alternative in your dispensation. Now I have long been in the habit of viewing every thing of that aspect rather in a melancholy light. You are standing on the justice, the reason, the truth of your cause. I should have heard God saying, 'Son of man, follow me.' It would have led me into a speculative—mystical sort of way. I should have seen in it the flood that is sweeping over the earth—the utter bankruptcy of all human affairs. Most men, if they had stood by and compared our conduct, would have commended yours as rational, but condemned mine as enthusiastic—as connecting things together which had no proper connexion; but this is my way of viewing every alternative in my dispensation."

"The heart," said he, "must be divorced from its idols. Age does a great deal in curing the man of his frenzy; but, if God has a special work for a man, he takes a shorter and sharper course with him. Stand ready for it. I have been in both schools. Bleeding and cauterizing have done much for me, and age has done much also—*Can I any longer taste what I eat or what I drink?*"

Though the Memoir of Mr. Cecil's life, and the letters which are subjoined, bear ample testimony to the TENDERNESS OF HIS RELATIVE AFFECTIONS, yet I cannot but add here what a friend wrote on visiting him, many years before his decease, at a time when he was expecting the death of Mrs. Cecil:—"Mrs. Cecil was ill. I called on Mr. Cecil. I found him in his study, sitting over his Bible in great sorrow. His tears fell so fast, that he could only utter broken sentences. He said, 'Christians do well to speak of the grace, love, and goodness of God; but we must remember that he is a holy and jealous God. Judgment must begin at the house of God. This severe stroke is but a farther call to me to arise and shake myself. My hope is still firm in God. He who sends the stroke, will bear me up under it; and I have no doubt, but if I saw the whole of his design, I should say, 'Let her be taken!' Yet, while there is life, I cannot help saying, 'Spare her another year, that I may be a little prepared for her loss!' I know I have higher ground of comfort; but I shall deeply feel the taking away of the dying lamp. Her excellence as a wife and a mother, I am obliged to keep out of sight, or I should be overwhelmed. All I can do is, to go from text to text, as a bird from spray to spray. Our Lord said to his disciples, *Where is your faith?* God has given her to be my comfort these many years, and shall I not trust him for the future? This is only a farther and more expensive education for the work of the ministry; it is but saying more closely, 'Will you pay the price?' If she should die, I shall request all my friends never once to mention her name to me. I can gather no help from what is called friendly condolence. Job's friends understood grief better when they sat down and spake not a word."

Our departed friend was, at once, a public

and a RETIRED man. While his sacred office, exercised for many years in a conspicuous sphere, brought him much before the world, his turn of mind was retired—he courted solitude—he held converse there with God, and his own great spirit mingled with the mighty dead; he had such a practical knowledge and deep impression of the nothingness of the whole world compared with spiritual and eternal realities, and he had so deeply felt, and so thoroughly despised its lying pretensions to meet the wants and to satisfy the longings of the immortal soul, that it was no sacrifice to him to turn away from the shows and pursuits of life, and to shut out all the splendor and seductions of the world.

Yet this retired spirit was not unsocial, morose, or repulsive. No one called him from his retirement to ask spiritual counsel, but he was met with tenderness and urbanity. No congenial mind encountered his, without eliciting sparks both of benevolence and wisdom. Not a child in his family could carry its little complaints to him, but he would stop the career of his mind to listen and relieve.

His study was his favorite retreat. His station exposed him to constant interruption, some necessary, and others arising from the injudiciousness of those who applied to him. It was not unusual with him to make use of his power of abstraction on these occasions. Time was too valuable to be lavished away on the inconsideration of some of those who thought it necessary to call on him. It was generally his practice, not immediately to obey a summons from his study, but when he knew he had to do with persons who would occupy much of his time by a long conversation before the business was brought forward, rather than hurt their feelings he would carry down in his mind the train of thought which he was pursuing in his study, and, while that which was beside the purpose played on his ear, his mind was following the subject on which it had entered before.

Some men are at home in society; the wide world is their dwelling-place; they are known and read of all men; they have a peculiar talent for improving mixed society. But this was not the character of Mr. Cecil. He unfolded himself, indeed, to his friends; but those friends could not but feel, that, when they broke in on his retirement for any other objects than what were connected with his high calling, they were intruders on inestimable time. I had, indeed, the privilege and happiness of free access to him at all times, for a considerable course of years, while I was his assistant in the ministry; but, for the reasons just assigned, though I was a diligent observer of his mind and habits, I feel myself not prepared to speak fully of his more domestic and retired character.

"Retirement," he said, "is my grand ordinance. Considerations govern me. Death is a mighty consideration with me. The utter vanity of every thing under the sun is another. If a man wishes to influence my mind, he must assign considerations; and, if he assigns

one or two which will weigh well, I seem impatient to stop him if he is proceeding to assign more. He has given me a consideration, and THAT suffices. The 'Night Thoughts' is a great book with me; notwithstanding its glaring imperfections, it realizes death and vanity. And, because this is the frame and habit of my own mind, my ministry partakes of it, and must partake of it, if I would preach naturally and from my heart."

In surveying the personal character of Mr. Cecil, it remains to speak somewhat more fully of his intellectual powers.

His IMAGINATION was not so much of the playful and elegant, as bold, inventive, striking, and instinctively judicious and discriminating.

His TASTE in the sister arts of painting, poetry, and music, was refined, and his judgment learned. In his younger days he had studied and excelled in painting and music; and, though he laid them aside that he might devote all his powers to his work, yet the savor of them so far remained, that I have been witness innumerable times, both in public and private, to the felicity of his illustrations drawn from these subjects, and to the superiority that his intimate knowledge of them gave him over most persons with whom they happened to be brought forward. His taste, when young, was for Italian music; but, in his latter years, he was fond of the German style, or rather the softer Moravian. Anthems, or any pieces wherein the words were reiterated, he disliked, for public worship especially, as they sacrificed the real spirit of devotion too much to the music. His feelings on this subject were exquisite. "Pure, spiritual, sublime devotion," he would say, "should be the soul of public music." He often lamented the introduction of any other style of architecture in places of worship, beside that which was so peculiarly appropriate, and which, because it was so, called up associations best suited to the purposes of meeting. He said most strikingly—"I never enter a Gothic church without feeling myself impressed with something of this idea—'Within these walls has been resounded for centuries, by successive generations, 'Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ!' The very damp that trickles down the walls, and the unsightly green that moulders upon the pillars, are far more pleasing to me from their associations, than the trim, finished, classic, heathen piles of the present fashion."

His powers of comparison, analogy, and JUDGEMENT, have been rarely equalled. These had been exercised so long, and with so much energy, on all the conditions and relations around him—on the word of God—on his own mind—on the history, opinions, passions, prejudices, and motives of men in every age, and of every character and station—on moral causes and effects—on every subject that can come within the grasp of a philosophic mind—that the result was a wisdom so prominent and commanding, that every man felt himself with a mind of the very first order both in capability and acquirement. In some cases, wherein my wishes, perhaps, formed my opinions; and,

trying to hide the truth from myself, I have asked his opinion as a confirmation of my own—he has unmasked my heart to itself, by his wise and searching replies. His decisions were more according to circumstances than in most men; and, when he gave them, it would generally be with a declaration that other circumstances might wholly change the aspect of the thing; and he did this in such a manner—if I may judge by my own case—as often to make a man look about him, and bethink himself what a treacherous and blind party he had to transact with in his bosom.

To those who did not know him intimately, he might sometimes appear to want a quickness of perception. The appearance of this faculty is often assumed, where God has not given it. Where the mind does decide rapidly, its conclusions are generally partial and defective, in proportion to their rapidity. Intuition is not a faculty of the present condition of being, whatever it may be of that toward which we are advancing. He affected no such quality, yet he possessed more of it than most men. When he did not fully understand what was addressed to him, he said so; and his mind was so familiar with the difficulty of discovering the truth through the veils and shades thrown over her by prejudice and self-love, that he did not hastily bring himself to think that he possessed your full meaning.

His good sense and wisdom led him to AVOID ALL PECULIARITY AND ECCENTRICITY. He was decidedly adverse to every thing of this nature. "When any thing peculiar appears," he would say, "in a religious man's manners, or dress, or furniture, this is supposed by the world to constitute his religion. A clergyman, indeed, is allowed by common consent, and indeed it is but decent in him, to have every thing about him plain and substantial, rather than ornamental and fashionable."

THE PERSONAL CHARACTER of Mr. Cecil had a manifest influence on his MINISTERIAL. We find him frequently accounting for those views and feelings which prevailed in his ministry, by a reference to his constitution and his early history.

HIS SENTIMENTS ON THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE are scattered through his writings, as this was ever present to his mind. Wherever he was, and whatever was his employment, he was always the Christian minister. He was ever on the watch to *do the work of an evangelist*, and to *make full proof of his ministry*.

I have collected together his thoughts on this subject in some sections of his "Remains;" and I think it impossible that any young minister should read these thoughts, without imbibing a higher estimation of his sacred office. More will be found on these points in the following views of his ministerial character gathered from his own lips.

These views were most striking and sublime. "A minister is a Levite. In general, he has, and he is to have, no inheritance among his brethren. Other men are not Le-

vites. They must recur to means, from which a minister has no right to expect any thing. Their affairs are all the little transactions of this world. But a minister is called and set apart for a high and sublime business. His transactions are to be between the living and the dead—between heaven and earth; and he must stand as with wings on his shoulders. He must look, therefore, for every thing in his affairs to be done for him and before his eyes. I am at a loss to conceive how a minister, with right feelings, can plot and contrive for a living. If he is told that there is such a thing for him if he will make such an application, and that it is to be so obtained and so only, all is well—but not a step farther. It is in vain, however, to put any man on acting in this manner, if he be not a Levite in principle and in character. These must be the expressions of a nature communicated to him from God—a high principle of faith begetting simplicity. He must be an eagle towering toward heaven on strong pinions. The barn-door hen must continue to scratch her grains out of the dunghill."

He thought that the life of a minister, with respect to worldly affairs, ought to be peculiarly above that of other men, a life of faith. It was his maxim to lay out no money unnecessarily—and, with this principle, he regarded his purse as in God's hands, and found it like the barrel of meal and the cruise of oil. He confessed that he could advise this conduct in no case but in that of a Christian minister, who was a wise and prudent, as well as right-hearted manager of his affairs. His habit was, to be the child of simplicity and faith—acting as a servant of God, on those principles which he judged most suitable to his character and station.

He had exalted ideas of ministerial authority—not the authority which results merely from office, but from office united with personal character—not the claims of priestly arrogance, but the claims of priestly dignity. "I never choose to forget that I am a PRIEST, because I would not deprive myself of the right to dictate in my ministerial capacity. I cannot allow a man, therefore, to come to me merely as a friend, on his spiritual affairs, because I should have no authority to say to him, 'Sir, you must do so and so.' I cannot suffer my best friends to dictate to me in any thing which concerns my ministerial duties. I have often had to encounter this spirit; and there would be no end of it, if I did not check and resist it. I plainly tell them that they know nothing of the matter. I ask them if it is decent, that a man immersed in other concerns should pretend to know my affairs and duties better than myself, who, as they ought to believe, make them the study of my life. I have been disgusted—deeply disgusted—at the manner in which some men of flaming religious profession talk of certain preachers. They estimate them just as Garrick would have estimated the worth of players, or as Handel would have ranged an orchestra. 'Such an one is clever—he is a master.'—Clever!—a mas-

ter!—Worth, and character, and dignity are of no weight in the scale.”

These views are just and noble; and they are suited to his own great mind, and the entire hold which his office had on his heart. But—listening with his whole soul to that injunction, *Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them*—it may be doubted whether he did not sometimes challenge to his office more respect than the party concerned could be expected to allow due.

MR. CECIL'S PREPARATION AND TRAINING FOR THIS EXALTED OFFICE have been already spoken of in the view of his personal character. This was, as has been seen, of no common kind.

HIS QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THE MINISTRY were peculiar. The great natural powers which God had given him were moulded and matured by the training and discipline through which he was led, and were consecrated by grace to the service of his Master. It will not be requisite to recapitulate what has been said on this subject. I shall here speak only of those qualifications which were more appropriate to him as a public teacher.

HIS LEARNING consisted more in the knowledge of other men's ideas, than in an accurate acquaintance with the niceties of the languages. Yet he was better acquainted with these, than many who devote a disproportionate time to this acquisition. His incessant application, chiefly by candle-light, when at Oxford, to the study of Greek, of which he was enthusiastically fond, brought on an almost total loss of sight for six months. He had determined to become a perfect master of the niceties of that refined and noble language. The counsel, however, which he received from Dr. Bacon, and which is recorded in his “Remains,” under the head of “Miscellaneous Remarks on the Christian Ministry,” put him on proportioning his attention more according to the future utility of his pursuits than he had been accustomed to. “I was struck with his advice,” he said. “I had an unsettled sort of religion, but enough to make me see and choose the truth which he set before me.”

So solid and extensive was Mr. Cecil's real learning, that there were no important points, in morals or religion, on which he had not read the best authors, and made up his mind on the most mature deliberation; nor could any topic be started in history or philosophy, on subjects of art or of science, with which he was not found more generally acquainted than other men. But while he could lay these parts of learning under contribution to aid him in his one object of impressing truth on man, he was a master in the learning which is more peculiarly appropriate to his profession. He was so much in the habit of daily reading the Scriptures in the originals, that, as he told me, he went to this employ naturally and insensibly. He limited himself to no stated quantity; but, as his time allowed, he read one or two, and sometimes five or six chapters daily.

Mr. Cecil had THE POWER OF EXCITING AND

PRESERVING ATTENTION above most men. All his effort was directed, first to engage attention, and then to repay it—to allure curiosity, and then to gratify it.

Till the attention was gained, he felt that nothing could be effected on the mind. Sometimes he would have recourse to unusual methods, suited, indeed, to his auditory, to awaken and fix their minds. “I was once preaching,” he said, “a charity sermon where the congregation was very large, and chiefly of the lower order. I found it impossible, by my usual method of preaching, to gain their attention. It was in the afternoon, and my hearers seemed to meet nothing in my preaching which was capable of rousing them out of the stupefaction of a full dinner. Some lounged and some turned their backs on me. ‘I MUST HAVE ATTENTION,’ I said to myself. ‘I WILL be heard.’ The case was desperate; and in despair, I sought a desperate remedy. I exclaimed aloud, ‘Last Monday morning a man was hanged at Tyburn’—instantly the face of things was changed! All was silence and expectation! I caught their ear, and retained it through the sermon.” This anecdote leads me to observe, that Mr. Cecil had, in an unusual degree, the talent of adapting his ministry to his congregation. While he was, for instance, preaching on the same day at Lothbury, at St. John's morning and afternoon, and at Spitalfields in the evening, he found four congregations at these places, in many respects quite distinct from one another; and yet he adapted his preaching, with admirable skill, to meet their habits of thinking.

But when he had gained the attention, he was ever on the watch not to weary it. He seemed to have continually before his eyes the sentiments of our great critic and moralist: “Tediuousness is the most fatal of all faults; negligences or errors are single and local, but tediousness pervades the whole; other faults are censured and forgotten, but the power of tediousness propagates itself. He that is weary the first hour, is more weary the second; as bodies forced into motion, contrary to their tendency, pass more and more slowly through every successive interval of space.” Mr. Cecil would say, “You have a certain quantity of attention to work on; make the best use of it while it lasts. The iron will cool, and then nothing, or worse than nothing, is done. If a preacher will leave unsaid all *vain repetitions*, and watch against undue length in his entrance and width in his discussion, he may limit a written sermon to half an hour, and one from notes to forty minutes; and this time he should not allow himself to exceed, except on special occasions.”

HIS POWER OF ILLUSTRATION was great and versatile. His topics were chiefly taken from Scripture and from life. His manner of illustrating his subjects by Scripture examples, was the most finished I ever heard. They were never introduced violently or abruptly; but

his matter was so moulded in preparation for them, by a few well turned sentences, that the illustration seemed to be placed in the Scripture almost for the sake of the doctrine. The general features of the character or history were left in the back-ground, and those only which were appropriate to the matter in hand were brought forward, and were thus presented with great force to the mind. His talent in discriminating the striking features, and connecting them with his matter, was so peculiar, that the histories of Abraham, of Jacob, of David, and of St. Paul, seemed in his hands to be ever new, and to be exhaustless treasures of illustration.

The turn both of his mind and of his experience seemed to lead him to this method. What he did, therefore, with ease and feeling, it was natural should be done frequently; and, accordingly, I have scarcely ever heard a sermon from him in which there were not repeated exercises of this peculiar talent; and in some sermons almost the entire subject has been treated in this manner.

This talent of illustrating his subjects, and particularly of seizing incidents for improvement, gave an edge to his wise admonitions in private, and fixed them deep in the memory. Riding with a friend in a very windy day, the dust was so troublesome that his companion wished they were at their journey's end, where they might ride in the fields free from dust; and this wish he repeated more than once while on the road. When they reached the fields, the flies so teased his friend's horse, that he could scarcely keep his seat on the saddle. On his bitterly complaining, "Ah! Sir," said Mr. Cecil, "when you were in the road the dust was your only trouble, and all your anxiety was to get into the fields: you forgot that the fly was there! Now this is a true picture of human life; and you will find it so in all the changes you make in future. We know the trials of our present situation; but the next will have trials, and perhaps worse, though they may be of a different kind."

At another time, the same friend said he should esteem it a favor, if he would tell him of any thing which he might in future see in his conduct which he thought improper. "Well, Sir!" he said, "many a man has directed the watchman to call him early in the morning, and has then appeared very anxious for his coming early; but the watchman has come before he has been ready for him! I have seen many people very desirous of being told their faults; but I have seen very few who were pleased when they received the information. However, I like to receive an invitation, and I have no reason to suppose you will be displeased till I see it so. I shall, therefore, remember that you have asked for it."

His *STYLE*, particularly in preaching and in free conversation, was easy and natural. If he ever labored his expression, it was in search of emphasis, rather than precision—of words which would penetrate the soul, rather than round his period and float in the ear. He con-

sidered that vigorous conceptions would clothe themselves in the fittest expressions—

Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.

Or, as Milton has admirably said—"True eloquence I find to be none, but the serious and hearty love of truth; and that, whose mind soever is fully possessed with a fervent desire to know good things, and with the dearest charity to infuse the knowledge of them into others, WHEN SUCH A MAN WOULD SPEAK, his words, like so many nimble and airy servitors, trip about him at command, and in well ordered files, as he would wish, fall abruptly into their own places."

His written style has less ease than that of his conversation or preaching. He excelled rather in strong intuitive sense, than in a train of arguments; and more in the liveliness of his thoughts, than in their arrangement. He would put down his thoughts as they arose—often at separate times, and as suggested by the occasion—and was not always nice in rejecting obsolete expressions, or antithesis in sense. This occasioned a want of flow and ease in many parts of his writings, which was obviated by the warmth of conversation or preaching.

IMPRESSION was the leading feature of his ministry. Perhaps the INFORMATION conveyed by it to the mind was not sufficiently systematic and minute. He had seen so much the evil of spending the preacher's time in doctrinal statements, that possibly there was some deficiency in this respect in his own practice. When, indeed, he had to introduce religion to his congregations at St. John's or Cobham, on his first entering on those charges, he dealt with them as a people needing information on first principles; but my remark applies to the habit and course of his ministry. For, however true it is, that, when a man becomes a serious reader of God's word, he must grow in the knowledge of the truth; yet many will still read the Bible with an indiscriminating mind, unless their minister's statements give them, not only a lucid general view of doctrines, but somewhat of a systematic and connected view; and not a few—buried in the cares of the world—will derive all their notions of the system of divine truth from what they hear in public.

Mr. Cecil wrote and spoke to mankind. He dealt with the business and bosoms of men. An energy of truth prevailed in his ministry, which roused the conscience; and a benevolence reigned in his spirit, which seized the heart; yet I much question whether the prevailing effect of his preaching was not determination grounded on CONVICTION and ADMIRATION, rather than on EMOTION. When in perfect health and spirits, and master of his subject, his eloquence was finished and striking; but, though there was often a tenderness which awakened corresponding feelings in the hearer, yet his eloquence wanted that vehement passion which overpowers and carries away the minds of others,

—*si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primus ipsi tibi—*

This is the great secret for getting hold of the heart. But as not much of the impassioned entered into the composition of his nature, and he was at the same time pre-eminent in genius and judgment, it could not but follow that ADMIRATION should affect the hearer more frequently than STRONG FEELING. A friend has told me that he has often lost the benefit of the truth which Mr. Cecil has uttered, in admiration of the exquisite manner in which it was conveyed. And I have again and again detected this in myself; and found I have been watching eagerly for what would fall next from him, not in the spirit of a *new-born babe that desires the sincere milk of the word that I might grow thereby*, but for the gratification of a mental voluptuousness. I desire no one will suppose that I impute to him any of the studied artifices of eloquence. No man sought more than he did that his hearers' *faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*. No man more sincerely aimed to have his *speech and his preaching not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power; yet, moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out and set in order the messages of divine mercy. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, yet that which was written was upright, even words of truth*. He could not but treat his subjects in this exquisite manner, while his taste, his genius, and his nature remained; yet this could not but be sanctified to his Master's honor, while he retained the perfect integrity, the deep conviction, and the singleness of eye which his Master had given him. That it was the farthest possible from trick and artifice might be seen in his most familiar conversation; where his manner, when he was fully called out, was exactly what it was in the pulpit. His mind grasped every subject firmly; his imagination clothed it with images—embodied it—gave it life—called up numberless associations and illustrations; it was realized; it was present to him; his taste and judgment enabled him to seize it in the most striking points of view.

"His apprehensions of religion," Mr. Wilson most justly observes, "WERE GRAND AND ELEVATED. His fine powers, governed by divine grace, were exactly calculated to seize all the grandeur of the Gospel. The stupendous magnitude of the objects which the Bible proposes to man, the incomparable sublimity of eternal pursuits, the astonishing scheme of redemption by an incarnate Mediator, the native grandeur of a rational and immortal being, stamped with the impress of God, the fall of this being into sin, and poverty, and meanness, and guilt, his recovery by grace to more than his original dignity in the love and service of his Creator, filled all his soul. He seemed often to labor with an imagination occupied with his noble theme. He felt, and he taught, that no other subject was worthy the consideration of man. In comparison with it, he led his auditors to condemn and trample on all the petty objects of this lower world. Its

meanness, its uncertainty, its deceit, its vanity, its vexation, its nothingness, he set fully in their view. He even made them look down with a generous concern on those who were buried in its interests, and who forgot, amidst the toys of children, the real business of life."

Some of his printed sermons are perfect models of simplicity, vivacity, and effect.—That, for instance, on the "Power of Faith."

HIS COUNTERNANCE, though not modelled altogether after the artificial rules of beauty, beamed in animated conversation and in the pulpit, with the beauty of a great and noble mind. Dignity and benevolence were strongly portrayed there. The variety of its expression was admirable: nor could any one feel the full force of the soul which he threw into his discourses, if this expression was concealed from him by distance or situation. His ACTION was graceful and forcible: latterly, owing perhaps to his increasing infirmities, and almost uninterrupted pain, it discovered, I think, some constraint and want of ease.

THERE WAS A FAMILIARITY and an AUTHORITY in his manner, which, to strangers, sometimes appeared dogmatism. His manner was, in truth, like that of no other man. It was altogether original; and, because it was original, it sometimes offended those who had no other idea of manner than of that to which they had been accustomed. Yet, even the prejudiced could not hear him with indifference. There was a dignity and command, a decision and energy, a knowledge of the heart and the world, an uprightness of mind and a desire to do good; and all this, united with a tenderness and affection, which few could witness without some favorable impressions.

His most striking sermons were generally those which he preached from very short texts, such as—*My soul hangeth on thee—All my fresh springs are in thee—O Lord! teach me my way—As thy day is, so shall thy strength be*. In these sermons, the whole subject had probably struck him at once; and what comes in this way is generally found to be more natural and forcible than what the mind is obliged to excogitate by its own laborious efforts: As the subject grows out of the state of the mind at the time, there is that degree of affinity between them which occasions the mind to seize it forcibly, and to clothe it with vivid colors. A train of the most natural associations presents itself, as one link draws with it its kindred links. The attention is engaged—the mind is concentrated—scripture and life present themselves without effort, in the most natural relations which they bear to the subject that has full possession of the man, and composition becomes easy, and even interesting.

It was a frequent and very useful method with him, to open and explain his subject in a very brief manner, and then to draw inferences from it; which inferences formed the great body of the sermon, and were rather matters of ADDRESS to the consciences and hearts of his hearers, than of DISCUSSION; so that the whole subject was a kind of applica-

tion. This seems to me to have been his most effective manner of preaching. Take an instance :—Mat. xviii. 20. I. EXPLAIN the words. II. Raise from them two or three REMARKS: Contemplate 1. The glory and God-head of our Master: 2. The honor which he puts on his house and the assembly of his Saints: 3. The privilege of being one of Christ's servants whom he will meet: 4. The obligations lying on such servants—*What manner of servants ought such to be?*

He was remarkably observant of character. When I have asked his opinion of a person, he has frequently surprised me with such a full and accurate delineation of him, as he could have obtained only by a very patient and penetrating observation. The reason of this appeared, when I learned that it was his custom in his sermon notes, when he wished to describe a particular character, not to put down its chief features as they occurred to his mind from the general observations which he had made on men; but he would put down the initial of some person's name, with whom he was well acquainted, and who stood in his mind as the representative of that class of characters. He had nothing to do then, when he came to enlarge on that part of his subject, but strongly to realize to himself the person in question, and he would draw a much more vivid picture of a real character than he could otherwise do.*

Mr. Cecil was not himself led to the knowledge of God through great terrors of conscience: his ministry did not, therefore, so much abound in delineations of the workings and malignity of sin, as in those topics which grew out of his course of experience; nor did he enter frequently or largely into the details of the spiritual conflict. He was himself drawn to God, and subdued by a sense of divine mercy and friendship; he was led, therefore, to detail largely the transactions of the believing mind with God, in the exercise of dependance and submission.

He was more aware than most men of the DIFFICULTY OF BRINGING DOWN THE TRUTH TO THE COMPREHENSION OF THE MASS OF HEARERS.

A young minister may leave college with the best theory in the world, and he may take with him into a country parish a determination to talk in the language of simplicity itself; but the actual capacity to make himself understood and felt is so far removed from his former habits, that it is only to be acquired by experience. Hear how wisely Mr. Cecil wrote to a young friend about to take orders:—"I

* Lavater somewhere mentions an admirable practice of his own, which carried our friend's principle into constant use in his ministry. He fixed on certain persons in his congregation, whom he considered as representatives of the respective classes into which his hearers might be properly divided—amounting, as I recollect, to SEVEN. In composing his discourses, he kept each of these persons steadily in his eye; and labored so to mould his subject as to meet the case of every one—by which incomparable rule he rendered himself intelligible and interesting to all classes of his flock.

advised him, since he was so near his entrance into the ministry, to lay aside all other studies for the present, but the one I should now recommend to him. I would have him select some very poor and uninformed persons, and pay them a visit. His object should be to explain to them, and demonstrate to them, the truth of the solar system. He should first of all set himself to make that system perfectly intelligible to them, and then he should demonstrate it to their full conviction against all that the followers of Tycho Brahe, or any one else, could say against it. He would tell me it was impossible: they would not understand a single term. Impossible to make them astronomers! And shall it be thought an easy matter to make them understand redemption!"

He gave the following account of his HABIT OF PREPARATION FOR THE PULPIT :—

"I generally look into the portions of Scripture appointed by the church to be read in the services of the day. I watch, too, for any new light which may be thrown on passages in the course of reading, conversation, or prayer. I seize the occasions furnished by own experience—my state of mind—my family occurrences. Subjects taken up in this manner are always likely to meet the cases and wants of some persons in the congregation. Sometimes, however, I have no text prepared: and I have found this to arise generally from sloth: I go to work: this is the secret: make it a business: something will arise where least expected.

"It is important to begin preparation early. If it is driven off late, accidents may occur which may prevent due attention to the subject. If the latter days of the week are occupied, and the mind driven into a corner, the sermon will usually be raw and undigested. Take time to reject what ought to be rejected, and to supply what ought to be supplied.

"It is a favorite method with me to reduce the text to some point of doctrine. On that topic I enlarge, and then apply it. I like to ask myself—'What are you doing?—What is your aim?'

"I will not foretell my own views by first going to commentators. I talk over the subject to myself: I write down all that strikes me: and then I arrange what is written. After my plan is settled, and my mind has exhausted its stores, then I would turn to some of my great Doctors to see if I am in no error: but I find it necessary to reject many good things which the Doctors say; they will tell to no good effect in a sermon. In truth, to be effective, we must draw more from nature and less from the writings of men: we must study the book of Providence, the book of nature, the heart of man, and the book of God: we must read the history of the world: we must deal with matters of fact before our eyes."

In respect to mechanical preparation, Mr. Cecil was in the habit of using eight quarto pages, on which he put down his main and subordinate divisions, with such hints as he thought requisite. These notes, written in au

open and legible manner, such as his eye could catch with ease, he put into one of the portable quarto Bibles, of which several editions were printed in the seventeenth century, in a good type, but, in consequence of the closeness and excellence of the paper, such as bind up in a very compact size. Of these editions there are some* which are printed page for page with another: and one of these editions Mr. Cecil was in the constant habit of using, both in public and in private, from the mechanical assistance afforded to him in turning to passages from the recollection of the part of the page in which they occurred.

It will be interesting to hear Mr. Cecil's own ACCOUNT OF HIS MANNER OF COMMENCING HIS MINISTRY; as it notices mistakes from which he was not only early but most effectually delivered, and his remarks on them may afford a serious caution to others.

"I set out," he said, "with levity in the pulpit. It was above two years before I could get the victory over it, though I strove under sharp piercings of conscience. My plan was wrong. I had bad counsellors. I thought preaching was only entering the pulpit, and letting off a sermon. I really imagined this was trusting to God, and doing the thing cleverly. I talked with a wise and pious man on the subject. 'There is nothing,' said he, 'like appealing to facts.' We sat down and named names. We found men in my habit disreputable. This first set my mind right. I saw such a man might sometimes succeed: but I saw, at the same time, that whoever would succeed in his general interpretations of Scripture, and would have his ministry that of a *workman that needeth not to be ashamed*—must be a laborious man. What can be produced by men who refuse this labor!—a few raw notions, harmless, perhaps, in themselves, but false as stated by them. What, then, should a young minister do!

His office says, 'Go to your books. Go to retirement. Go to prayer.'—'No!' says the enthusiast, 'Go to preach. Go, and be a witness!'—A witness!—of what!—He don't know!"

Thus qualified by nature, education, and grace—enriched by his various manly acquisitions—and matured by experience, he appeared in the pulpit unquestionably as one of the first preachers—perhaps the very first preacher of his time.

HE WAS SINCERELY ATTACHED TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, both by principle and feeling—to her ORDER AND DECORUM. He entered into the spirit of those obligations, which lay on him as a clergyman; and, looking at general consequences, would never break through the order and discipline of the church, to obtain any particular, local, and temporary ends.

In the more PRIVATE exercise of his pastoral office, as a counsellor and friend, he manifested great FAITHFULNESS, TENDERNESS, and wisdom.

In proof of this, I might appeal to what is said in the "Remains," on the subject of "visiting deathbeds." I shall here subjoin a few more illustrations of this part of his character.

An interview was contrived between him and a noble lady, by some of her relations. She began to listen to the affairs of religion. Her life had been gay and trifling. She knew that he understood her situation; and she began to introduce her case by saying that she supposed he thought her a very contemptible and wicked creature. "No, Madam, I do not look at you in that view. I consider that you have been a wanderer; pursuing happiness in a mistaken road—an immortal being fluttering through the present short but important scene, without one serious concern for what is to come after it is passed by. And, while others know what is to happen to them, and wait for it, you are totally ignorant of the subject."—"But, Sir, is it possible to arrive at any certainty with respect to a future condition?"—"Why, what little trifling scenes would occupy your ladyship and myself, if we were confined to this small spot of a carpet that is under our feet! The world is a little, mean, despicable scene in itself. But we must leave it; and can you suppose that we are left to step into another state, as into a dark abyss—not knowing what awaits us there? No—the next step I take from the world is not into a void that no one has explored—a fathomless abyss—a chaos of clouds and darkness—but I know what it is—I am assured of it." He said to me, in reporting this conversation, "I rested on this, and left it to work on her mind. I thought it better to defer the subject of this assurance to try her, and I have reason to believe that she feels anxious for our next occasion of meeting, that she may hear how we can make out the grounds of our assurance." This is one, among many instances, of the wise methods in which he accommodated his instructions to the character.

"Many of my people," he said, "and especially females, talk thus to me—'I am under continual distress of mind. I can lay hold of no permanent ground of peace. If I seem to get a little, it is soon gone again. I am out at sea, without compass or anchor. My heart sinks. My spirit faints. My knees tremble. All is dark above, and all is horror beneath.'—'And, pray, what is your mode of life?'—'I sit by myself.'—'In this small room, I suppose, and over your fire?'—'A considerable part of my time.'—'And what time do you go to bed?'—'I cannot retire till two or three o'clock in the morning.'—'And you lie late, I suppose, in the morning?'—'Frequently.'—'And pray, what else can you expect from this mode of life, than a relaxed and unstrung system—and, of course, a mind enfeebled, anxious, and disordered? I understand your case. God seems to have qualified me to understand it, by especial dispensations. My natural disposition is gay, volatile, spirited. My nature would never sink. But I have sometimes felt my spirit absorbed in horrible apprehensions, without any

* I have compared four of these Bibles, viz., Field's, London, 1648—Haye's, Camb. 1670, and also that of 1677—and Buck's, Camb. without date.

assignable natural cause. Perhaps it was necessary I should be suffered to feel this, that I might feel for others; for, certainly, no man can have any adequate sympathy with others, who has never thus suffered himself. I can feel for you, therefore, while I tell you that I think the affair with you is chiefly physical. I myself have brought on the same feelings by the same means. I have sat in my study till I have persuaded myself that the ceiling was too low to suffer me to rise and stand upright; and air and exercise alone could remove the impression from my mind!"

His taking the charge of St. JOHN'S CHAPEL is the most important event of his life, as it appears to have been the sphere for which he was peculiarly raised up and prepared by Providence.

The circumstances attending his establishment of a serious and devout congregation in this place, mark the strength and simplicity of his mind; while they may show the necessity under which such men will sometimes be brought, of acting for themselves, with perfect independence of the whole body of their brethren.

These circumstances he related to me as follows:—"When I married, I lived at a small house at Islington, situated in the midst of a garden, for which I paid 14*l.* a year. My annual income was then only 80*l.*, and, with this, I had to support myself, my wife, and a servant. I was then, indeed, minister of St. John's, but I received nothing from the place for several of the earlier years. When I was sent thither, I considered that I was sent to the people of that place and neighborhood. I thought it my duty, therefore, to adopt a system and a style of preaching which should have a tendency to meet their case. All which they had heard before, was dry, frigid, and lifeless. A high, haughty, stalking spirit characterized the place. I was thrown among men of the world, men of business, men of reading, and men of thought. I began, therefore, with principles. I preached on the divine authority of the sacred Scriptures. I dissected Saurin's Sermons. I took the sinews and substance of some of our most masterly writers. I preached on such texts as—*If ye believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will ye believe though one arose from the dead.* I set myself to explain terms and phrases. My chief object was under-ground work. But, what was the consequence of this! An outcry was raised against me throughout the religious world. It was said, that, at other places, I continued to preach the truth; but that, at St. John's, I was sacrificing it to my hearers. Even my brethren, instead of entering into my reasons and plan, lay on their oars. My protectress turned her back on me. I hesitated, at first, to enter on so great a risk; but, with grandeur of spirit, she told me she would put her fortune on the issue: if any benefit resulted from it, it should be mine, and she would bear me harmless of all loss. She heard me a few times, and then wholly withdrew herself, and even took away her servants. Some of them would

now and then steal in; but as they reported that they got 'no food,' the report did but strengthen the prejudices of their mistress. She could not enter into my motives. I was obliged to regard her conduct as Huss did that of the man who was heaping the faggots round him, *O sancta simplicitas!* She could not calculate consequences, and was unmoved even when I placed my conduct in its strongest light—"Can you attribute any but the purest motives to me? Ought not the very circumstances to which I voluntarily subject myself by adhering to the plan you condemn, to gain me some credit for my intentions? Had I preached here, in the manner I preached elsewhere, you know that the place would have been crowded by the religious world. I should then have obtained from it an income of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year, whereas I now sit down with little or no advantage from it, though I have a family rising up about me. God sent me hither to preach to this people, and to raise a congregation in this place; and I am proceeding in that system and way, which seems to me best adapted under God to meet the states of this people; and while I am doing this, I bring on myself temporal injury. I can have no possible motive to sacrifice the truth to a few blind Pharisees who will never, while I live, become my friends."

"I labored under this desertion of my friends for a long time: it was about seven years before affairs began to wear such an aspect, that my protectress and others allowed that matters had certainly turned out as they could not have foreseen. Several witnesses rose up of undoubted and authentic character, to testify the power of the grace of God. One circumstance will place the prejudice which existed against me in a strong light. A converted Jewess, who had been driven from her father's house on account of her sentiments, and was a woman of great simplicity and devotion, refused to accompany a friend to St. John's, because, as she said, she could not worship there spiritually, and rather chose to spend the afternoon among her friend's books; in which employment, I doubt not, she worshipped God in the spirit, and was accepted of him. For my own satisfaction, I wrote down at large the reasons on which I had formed my conduct, for I was almost driven into my own breast for support and justification. One friend, indeed, stood by me. He saw my plan and entered fully into it; and said such strong things on the subject as greatly confirmed my own mind. 'The Church of Christ,' said he, 'must sometimes be sacrificed for Christ.' A certain brother preached a charity sermon; and in such a style, that he seemed to say to me, 'Were I here, you would see how I would do the thing.' What good he did, I know not; but some of the evil I know, as several persons forsook the chapel, and assigned his sermon as the reason; and others expressed themselves alarmed at the idea of Methodism having crept into the place. It was ill-judged and unkind. He should have entered into my design, or have been silent."

About the middle of July, 1800, Mr. Cecil

entered on the Livings of BISLEY and COBHAM in Surry. A few weeks after this I visited him with our dear and mutual friend Dr. Fearon.

Here I saw him in a quite different situation from any in which I had seen him before, and was not a little curious to remark the manner in which he would treat a set of plain and homely villagers. Though he was repeatedly in great anguish during the day which we passed with him, yet his mind in the intervals was so vigorous and luminous that I have scarcely ever gathered so much from him in an equal time.

On this occasion, among other things which are recorded in his "Remains," he stated to us his views and feelings respecting his new charge. "Bisley is a rectory. It is completely out of the world. The farmers in these parts are mostly occupiers of their own land. They crowded round me when I first came, and were eager to make bargains with me for the tithe. I told them I was ignorant of such matters, but that I would propose a measure which none of them could object to. The farmers of Bisley should nominate three farmers of Cobham parish, and whatever those three Cobham farmers should appoint me to receive, that they should pay. This was putting myself into their power indeed, but the one grand point with me was to conciliate their minds, and pave the way for the gospel in these parishes. And so far it answered my purpose. I had desired the three farmers to throw the weight, in dubious cases, into the farmer's scale. After we had settled the business, one of the three, to convince the Bisley farmers that they had acted in the very spirit of my directions, proposed to find a person who would immediately give them 50*l.* a year for their bargain with me. This has given them an idea that we act upon high and holy motives."

What a noble trait is this of his upright and disinterested mind! One might almost with confidence predict that such an introduction into his parishes was a presage of great usefulness. A minister has no right to wanton away the support of his family; but, having secured that, whatever sacrifices he may make with such holy motives as these, will be abundantly repaid; probably in the success of his ministry, certainly in his Master's approbation and the peace of his own bosom. Those sacrifices of what may be strictly his due, which a narrow and worldly man may refuse to make, though he entail discord and feuds on his parish, will be trifles to the mind of a true Christian minister.

"I hardly think it likely that a man could have been received in a more friendly manner than I have been. About 500 people attended at Cobham, and 300 at Bisley. I find I can do any thing with them while I am serious. A Baptist preacher had been somewhere in the neighborhood before I came. He seems to have been wild and eccentric, and to have planted a prejudice in consequence of this in the people's minds, who appear to have had

no other notion of Methodism than that it was eccentricity.

"While I am grave and serious, they will allow me to say or do any thing. For instance; a few Sundays since it rained so prodigiously hard when I had finished my sermon at Bisley, that I saw it was impracticable for any body to leave the church. I then told the people, that as it was likely to continue for some time, we had better employ ourselves as well as we could, and so I would take up the subject again. I did so; and they listened to me readily for another half hour, though I had preached to them three quarters of an hour before I had concluded. All this they bear, and think it nothing strange; but one wild brother with one eccentric sermon would do me more mischief than I should be able in many months to cure."

A very strong instance of personal attachment to him occurred soon after he took Cobham. A stranger was observed to attend church every Sunday, and to leave the village immediately after service was over. Every new face there was a phenomenon, and of course the appearance of this man led to inquiry. He was found to be one of his hearers at St. John's, a poor working-man, whom the advantages received under his ministry had so knit to his pastor, that he found himself repaid for a weekly journey of fifty miles. Mr. C. remonstrated with him on the inexpediency and impropriety of thus spending his Sabbath, when the pure word of God might be heard so much nearer home.

But we must approach the closing scene of this great man's life and labors.

No touches need to be added to the affecting picture which Mrs. Cecil has drawn of his gradual descent to the grave. I will only subjoin here some remarks on his views and feelings with respect to that Gospel of which he had been so long an eminent and successful minister.

His views of Christianity were modified, as has been seen, by his constitution and the circumstances of his life. His dispensation was to meet a particular class of hearers. He was fitted beyond most men to assert the reality, dignity, and glory of religion—as contrasted with the vanity, meanness, and glare of the world. This subject he treated like a master. Men of the world felt that they were in the presence of their superior—of one who unmasked their real misery to themselves, and pursued them through all the false refuges of vain and carnal minds.

While this was the principal character of Mr. Cecil's ministry for years, at that place for which he seems to have been specially prepared; yet he was elsewhere, with equal wisdom, leading experienced Christians forward in their way to heaven; and, latterly, the habit of his own mind, and the whole system of his ministry, were manifestly ripening in those views which are peculiar to the Gospel.

No man had a more just view of his own ministry than he had; nor could any one more highly value the excellence which he saw in

others, though it was of a different class from his own. "I have been lately selecting," he said to me, "some of C—'s letters for publication. With the utmost difficulty I have given some little variety. He begins with Jesus Christ, carries him through, and closes with him. If a broken leg or arm turns him aside, he seems impatient to dismiss it as an intrusive subject, and to get back again to his topic. I feel as I read his letters—'Why, you said this in the last sentence! What, over and over again! What, nothing else! No variety of view! No illustration!' And yet I confess, that, when I have walked out and my mind has been a good deal exercised on his letters, I have caught a sympathy—'It is one thing, without variety or relief; but this one thing is a TALISMAN!'—I have raised my head—I have trod firmly—my heart has expanded—I have felt wings! Men must not be viewed indiscriminately. To a certain degree I produce effect in my way, and with my views. The utter ruin and bankruptcy of man is so wrought into my experience, that I handle this subject naturally. Other men may use God's more direct means as naturally as I can use his more indirect and collateral ones. Every man, however, must rather follow than lead his experience; though, to a certain degree, if he finds his habits diverting him from Jesus Christ as the grand, prominent, only feature, he must force himself to choose such topics as shall lead his mind to him. I am obliged to subject myself to this discipline. I frequently choose subjects and enter into my plan, before I discover that the SAVIOUR occupies a part too subordinate; I throw them away, and take up others which point more directly and naturally to him."

In his last illness he spoke with great feeling on the same subject: "That Christianity may be very sincere, which is not sublime. Let a man read Maclaurin's sermon on the Cross of Christ, and enter into the subject with taste and relish, what beggary is the world to him! The subject is so high and so glorious, that a man must go out of himself, as it were, to apprehend it. The apostle had such a view when he said, *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*. I remember the time, even after I became really serious in religion, when I could not understand what St. Paul meant—not by setting forth the glory of Christ, but by talking of it in such hyperbolic terms, and always dwelling on the subject; whatever topic he began on, I saw that he could not but glide into the same subject. But I now understand why he did so, and wonder no more; for there is no other subject, comparatively, worthy our thoughts, and therefore it is that advanced Christians dwell on little else. I am fully persuaded, that the whole world becomes vain and empty to a man, in proportion as he enters into living views of Jesus Christ."

His FEELINGS on religion, as they respected his *submission to the divine will*, were admirably expressed by himself:—"We are servants, and we must not choose our station. I am now called to go down very low, but I must not

resist. God is saying to me, 'You have not been doing my work in my way; you have been too hasty. Now sit down and be content to be a quiet idler; and wait till I give you leave again to go on in your labors.'"

In respect to his PERSONAL COMFORT, he had said—"I have attained satisfaction as to my state, by a consciousness of change in my own breast, mixed with a consciousness of integrity."

Two evidences are satisfactory to me:

1. A consciousness of approving God's plan of government in the Gospel.

2. A consciousness, that, in trouble, I run to God as a child."

These evidences Mr. C. illustrated even in his diseased moments before his death. On that afflicting dispensation I shall make no remarks of my own, as I think nothing can be added to what my friend, his successor, has so well said in the second of his funeral sermons, and which is here subjoined.

"During the whole period of his last illness, a space of nearly three years, the state of his mind fluctuated with his malady. Every one who has had opportunities of observing the operation of palsy, knows, that without destroying, or, properly speaking, perverting the reasoning powers, it agitates and enervates them. Every object is presented through a discolored medium. False premises are assumed, and the mind is sometimes more than usually expert in drawing inferences accordingly. In a word, the whole system is deranged and shattered. An excessive care, and irritation, and despondency, are produced, under the impression of which the sufferer acts every moment, without being at all aware of the cause. His morbid anxiety is, besides, fixed on some inconsiderable or ideal matter, which he magnifies and distorts; while he remains incapable of attending to concerns of superior moment, and any attempts to rectify his misapprehensions quicken the irritation, and increase the effects of the disorder.

"Under this peculiar visitation it pleased God that our late venerable father should labor. The energy, and decision, and grandeur of his natural powers, therefore, gradually gave way, and a morbid feebleness succeeded. Yet even in this afflicting state, with his body on one side almost lifeless, his organs of speech impaired, and his judgment weakened, the spiritual dispositions of his heart displayed themselves in a remarkable manner. He appeared great in the ruins of nature; and his eminently religious character manifested itself, to the honor of divine grace, in a manner which surprised all who were acquainted with the ordinary effects of paralytic complaints. The actings of hope were, of course, impeded; but the habit of grace, which had been forming in his mind for thirty or forty years, shone through the cloud. At such a period there was no room for fresh acquisitions. The real character of the man could only appear, when disease allowed it to appear at all, according to the grand leading habits of his life. If his habits had been ambitious, or sensual, or covetous, or worldly, these tendencies, if any, would have displayed

themselves; but as his soul had been long established in grace, and spiritual religion had been incorporated with all his trains of sentiment and affection, and had become like a second nature, the holy dispositions of his heart acted with remarkable constancy under all the variations of his illness; so that one of his oldest friends observed to me, that if he had to choose the portion of his life, since he first knew him, in which the evidences of a state of salvation were most decisive, he should, without a moment's hesitation, select the period of his last distressing malady.

"Throughout his illness, his whole mind, instead of being fixed on some mean and insignificant concern, was riveted on spiritual objects. Every other topic was so uninteresting to him, and even burdensome, that he could with reluctance allow it to be introduced. The value of his soul, the emptiness of the world, the nearness and solemnity of death, were ever on his lips. He spent his whole time in reading the Scripture, and one or two old divines, particularly Archbishop Leighton. All he said and did was as a man on the brink of an eternal state.

"His humility, also, evidently ripened as he approached his end. He was willing to receive advice from every quarter. He listened with anxiety to any hint that was offered him. His view of his own misery and helplessness as a sinner, and of the necessity of being entirely indebted to divine grace, and being saved as the greatest monument of its efficacy, was continually on the increase.

"His simplicity and fervor in speaking of the Saviour were also very remarkable. As he drew nearer to death, his one topic was—Jesus Christ. All his anxiety and care were centred in this grand point. His apprehensions of the work and glory of Christ, of the extent and suitableness of his salvation, and of the unspeakable importance of being spiritually united to him, were more distinct and simple, if possible, than at any period of his life. He spake of him to his family, with the feeling, and interest, and seriousness of the aged and dying believer.

"His faith, also, never failed. I have heard him with faltering and feeble lips speak of the great foundations of Christianity with the fullest confidence. He said he never saw so clearly the truth of the doctrines which he had been preaching, as since his illness. His view of the certainty and excellency of God's promises in Christ was unshaken.

"The interest, likewise, which he took in the success of the Gospel, was prominent, when his disease at last remitted. His own people lay near his heart; and, when a providence had occurred which he hoped would promote their benefit, he expressed himself with old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'

"The principal effect of his distemper was in throwing a cloud over his comfort; yet, in producing this, the spiritual tendency of his mind appeared. His diseased depression operated, indeed, but it was in leading him to set a high

standard of holiness, to bring together elevated marks of regeneration, and to require decisive evidences of a spirit of faith and adoption. The acuteness of his judgment then argued so strongly from these false premises, that he necessarily excluded himself almost entirely from the consolation of hope. If I may be allowed a theological term—the objective acts of faith, those that related to the grand objects proposed in the Scriptures on the testimony of God, such as the work of redemption, the person of Christ, and the virtue of his blood, remained the same; nay, were ripened and strengthened as his dissolution approached; but the subjective acts of faith, those which respected his own interest in these blessings, and which gave life to the exercises of hope, rose and sunk with his disease. He was precisely like a man oppressed by a heavy weight; as the load was lightened, he began to move and exert himself in his natural manner; when the burden was increased, he sunk down again under the oppression.

"About a year before his death, when his powers of mind had for a long time been debilitated, but still retained some remnants of their former vigor, his religious feelings were at times truly desirable. His intellectual powers were, indeed, too far weakened for joy; but there was a resignation, a tranquillity, a ripeness of grace, a calm and holy repose on the bosom of the Saviour, that quite alarmed, if I may so speak, his anxious family, under the impression that there appeared nothing left for grace to do, and that he would soon be removed from them, *as a shock of corn cometh in its season*. Even when his disease had made still further progress, as often as the slightest alleviation was afforded him, his judgment became more distinct, his morbid depression lessened, and he was moderately composed. It was only a few weeks before his dissolution that such an interval was vouchsafed to him. He then spake with great feeling from the Scriptures, in family worship, for about half an hour; and dwelt on the love, and grace, and power of Christ, with particular composure of mind. I had the happiness of visiting him at this season. He was so much relieved from his disease, as to enter with me on general topics relating to religion, and to give me some excellent directions as to my conduct as a minister. In reply to various questions which I put to him, he spake to me to the following purport: 'I know myself to be a wretched, worthless sinner,' (the seriousness and feeling with which he spake I shall never forget,) 'having nothing in myself but poverty and sin. I know Jesus Christ to be a glorious and almighty Saviour. I see the full efficacy of his atonement and grace; and I cast myself entirely on him, and wait at his footstool. I am aware that my diseased and broken mind makes me incapable of receiving consolation; but I submit myself wholly to the merciful and wise dispensations of God.'

"One or two other interesting testimonies of the spiritual and devoted state of his heart may be here mentioned. A short time before

his decease he requested one of his family to write down for him in a book the following sentence: 'None but Christ, none but Christ, said Lambert dying at a stake; the same, in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, saith Richard Cecil.' The name was signed by himself, with his left hand, in a manner hardly legible through infirmity."

Such was Mr. Cecil. I sincerely regret that some masterly observer did not both enjoy and improve opportunities of delineating a more perfect picture of his great mind. I have, however, faithfully detailed the impressions which his character made on me during a long course of affectionate admiration of him; nor have I shrunk from intermingling such remarks, as every faithful observer must find occasion to make while he is watching the unfoldings of the best and greatest of men.

CHRISTIAN PARENTS, and particularly CHRISTIAN MOTHERS, may gather from the history and character of our departed friend every possible encouragement to the unwearied care of their children. While St. Austin, Bishop Hall, Richard Hooker, John Newton, Richard Cecil, and many other great and eminent servants of Christ, have left on record their grate-

ful acknowledgments to their pious mothers, as the instruments, under the grace and blessing of God, of winning them to himself, let no woman of faith and prayer despair respecting even her most untoward child.

Mr. Cecil's MERE ADMIRERS should feel what a weight of responsibility his ministry and his character have laid them under. They gave him the ear, but he labored for the heart. They were pleased with the man, but he prayed that they might become displeased with themselves. They would aid him in his schemes, but he was anxious that they should serve his Master. How soon must they meet him at that judgment-seat before which all must appear, to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil!

HIS SINCERE FRIENDS are called to imitate his example—to follow him as he followed Christ—to live above this vain world—to sacrifice every thing to the honor of Christ and the interests of eternity—to bear up under pain and weariness and anxiety, leaning on Almighty strength; till they join him in that world where weakness shall be felt no more!

JOSIAH PRATT.

REMAINS

OF THE

REV. RICHARD CECIL, M. A.

REMARKS MADE BY MR. CECIL, CHIEFLY IN CONVERSATION WITH THE EDITOR, OR IN DISCUSSIONS WHEN HE WAS PRESENT.

" Multa ab eo prudenter disputata, multa etiam breviter et commode dicta memoria mandabam, fierique studebam ejus prudentia doctior.—Cic. de Amicit. I.

On the Christian Life and Conflict.

THE direct cause of a Christian's spiritual life, is union with Christ. All attention to the mere circumstantials of religion has a tendency to draw the soul away from this union. Few men, except ministers, are called, by the nature of their station, to enter much into these circumstantials:—such, for instance, as the evidences of the truth of religion. Ministers feel this deadening effect of any considerable or continued attention to externals: much more must private Christians. The head may be strengthened, till the heart is starved. Some private Christians, however, may be called on, by the nature of those circles in which they move, to be qualified to meet and refute the objections which may be urged against religion. Such men, as well as ministers, while they are furnishing themselves for this purpose, must acquiesce in the work which God appoints for them, with prayer and watchfulness. If they cannot always live and abide close to the ark, and the pot of manna, and the cherubim, and the mercy-seat: yet they are drawing the water and gathering the wood necessary for the service of the camp. But let their hearts still turn toward the place where the Glory resideth.

THE Christian's fellowship with God is rather a habit than a rapture. He is a pilgrim, who has the habit of looking forward to the light before him: he has the habit of not looking back; he has the habit of walking steadily in the way, whatever be the weather, and whatever the road. These are his habits: and the Lord of the Way is his Guide, Protector, Friend, and Felicity.

As the Christian's exigencies arise, he has a spiritual habit of turning to God, and saying, with the Church, *"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon."* I have tried to find rest elsewhere. I have fled to shelters, which held out great promise of repose; but I have

now long since learned to turn unto thee:—*"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon."*

THE Christian will look back, throughout eternity, with interest and delight, on the steps and means of his conversion. "My father told me this! My mother told that! Such an event was sanctified to me! In such a place, God visited my soul!" These recollections will never grow dull and wearisome.

A VOLUME might be written on the various methods which God has taken, in providence, to lead men first to think of him.

THE history of a man's own life is, to himself, the most interesting history in the world, next to that of the Scriptures. Every man is an original and solitary character. None can either understand or feel the book of his own life like himself. The lives of other men are to him dry and vapid, when set beside his own. He enters very little into the spirit of the Old Testament, who does not see God calling on him to turn over the pages of this history when he says to the Jew, *"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years."* He sees God teaching the Jew to look at the records of his deliverance from the Red Sea, of the manna showered down on him from heaven, and of the Amalekites put to flight before him. There are such grand events in the life and experience of every Christian, it may be well for him to review them often. I have, in some cases, vowed before God to appropriate yearly remembrances of some of the signal turns of my life. Having made the vow, I hold it as obligatory: but I would advise others to greater circumspection; as they may bring a galling yoke on themselves, which God designed not to put on them.

TRUE grace is a growing principle. The Christian grows in DISCERNMENT: a child may play with a serpent; but the man gets as far

from it as he can: a child may taste poison; but the man will not suffer a speck of poison near him. He grows in HUMILITY: the blade shoots up boldly, and the young ear keeps erect with confidence: but the full corn in the ear inclines itself toward the earth, not because it is feeblcr, but because it is matured. He grows in STRENGTH: the new wine ferments and frets; but the old wine acquires a body and a firmness.

TENDERNESS of conscience is always to be distinguished from scrupulousness. The conscience cannot be kept too sensible and tender: but scrupulousness arises from bodily or mental infirmity, and discovers itself in a multitude of ridiculous, and superstitious, and painful feelings.

THE head is dull, in discerning the value of God's expedients; and the heart cold, sluggish, and reluctant, in submitting to them: but the head is lively, in the invention of its own expedients; and the heart eager and sanguine, in pursuit of them. No wonder, then, that God subjects both the head and the heart to a course of continual correction.

EVERY man will have his own criterion in forming his judgment of others. I depend very much on the effect of affliction. I consider how a man comes out of the furnace: gold will lie for a month in the furnace without losing a grain. And, while under trial, a child has a habit of turning to his father: he is not like a penitent, who has been whipped into this state: it is natural to him. It is dark, and the child has nowhere to run, but to his father.

DEFILEMENT is inseparable from the world. A man can nowhere rest his foot on it without sinking. A strong principle of assimilation combines the world and the heart together. There are, especially, certain occasions, when the current hurries a man away, and he has lost the religious government of himself. When the pilot finds, on making the port of Messina, that the ship will not obey the helm, he knows that she is got within the influence of that attraction, which will bury her in the whirlpool. We are to avoid the danger, rather than to oppose it. This is a great doctrine of Scripture. An active force against the world is not so much inculcated, as a retreating, declining spirit. *Keep thyself unspotted from the world.*

THERE are seasons when a Christian's distinguishing character is hidden from man. A Christian merchant on 'Change is not called to show any difference in his mere exterior carriage from another merchant. He gives a reasonable answer if he is asked a question. He does not fanatically intrude religion into every sentence he utters. He does not suppose his religion to be inconsistent with the common interchange of civilities. He is affable and courteous. He can ask the news of the day, and take up any public topic of con-

versation. But is he, therefore, not different from other men? He is like another merchant in the mere exterior circumstance, which is least in God's regard;—but, in his taste!—his views!—his science!—his hopes!—his happiness! he is as different from those around him as light is from darkness. He waits for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who never passes, perhaps, through the thoughts of those he talks with, but to be neglected and despised!

THE Christian is called to be like Abraham, in conduct; like Paul, in labors; and like John, in spirit. Though, as a man of faith, he goes forth not knowing whither, and his principle is hidden from the world, yet he will oblige the world to acknowledge: "His views, it is true, we do not understand. His principles and general conduct are a mystery to us. But a more upright, noble, generous, disinterested, peaceable, and benevolent man, we know not where to find." The world may even count him a madman; and false brethren may vilify his character, and calumniate his motives: yet he will bear down evil, by repaying good; and will silence his enemies, by the abundance of his labors. He may be shut out from the world—cast into prison—banished into obscurity—no eye to observe him, no hand to help him—but it is enough for him, if his Saviour will speak to him and smile on him.

CHRISTIANS are too little aware what their religion requires from them, with regard to their wishes. When we wish things to be otherwise than they are, we lose sight of the great practical parts of the life of godliness. We wish, and wish—when, if we have done all that lies on us, we should fall quietly into the hands of God. Such wishing cuts the very sinews of our privileges and consolations. You are leaving me for a time; and you say you wish you could leave me better, or leave me with some assistance: but, if it is right for you to go, it is right for me to meet what lies on me, without a wish that I had less to meet, or were better able to meet it.

I COULD write down twenty cases, wherein I wished God had done otherwise than he did; but which I now see, had I had my own will, would have led to extensive mischief. The life of a Christian is a life of paradoxes. He must lay hold on God: he must follow hard after him: he must determine not to let him go. And yet he must learn to let God alone. Quietness before God is one of the most difficult of all Christian graces—to sit where he places us; to be what he would have us to be, and this as long as he pleases. We are like a player at bowls; if he has given his bowl too little bias, he cries, "Flee:" if he has given it too much, he cries, "Rub;" you see him lifting his leg, and bending his body, in conformity to the motion he would impart to the bowl. Thus I have felt with regard to my dispensations: I would urge them or restrain them: I would assimilate them to the habit of my mind. But I have smarted for this un-

der severe visitations. It may seem a harsh, but it is a wise and gracious dispensation, toward a man, when, the instant he stretches out his hand to order his affairs, God forces him to withdraw it. Concerning what is morally good or evil, we are sufficiently informed for our direction; but concerning what is naturally good or evil, we are ignorance itself. Restlessness and self-will are opposed to our duty in these cases.

SCHOOLING THE HEART is the grand means of personal religion. To bring motives under faithful examination, is a high state of religious character: with regard to the depravity of the heart, we live daily in the disbelief of our own creed. We indulge thoughts and feelings, which are founded upon the presumption that all around us are imperfect and corrupted, but that we are exempted. The self-will and ambition and passion of public characters in the religious world, all arise from this sort of practical infidelity. And though its effects are so manifest in these men, because they are leaders of parties, and are set upon a pinnacle, so that all who are without the influence of their vortex can see them: yet every man's own breast has an infallible, dogmatizing, excommunicating, and anathematizing spirit working within.

Acting from the occasion, without recollection and inquiry, is the death of personal religion. It will not suffice merely to retire to the study or the closet. The mind is sometimes, in private, most ardently pursuing its particular object; and, as it then acts from the occasion, nothing is farther from it than recollection. I have for weeks together, in pursuit of some scheme, acted so entirely from the occasion, that, when I have at length called myself to account, I have seemed like one awaked from a dream. "Am I the man who could think and speak so and so? Am I the man who could feel such a disposition, or discover such conduct?" The fascination and enchantment of the occasion is vanished; and I stand like David in similar circumstances before Nathan. Such cases in experience are, in truth, a moral intoxication; and the man is only then sober, when he begins to school his heart.

THE servant of God has not only natural sensibilities, by which he feels, in common with other men, the sorrows of life; but he has moral sensibilities, which are peculiar to his character. When David was driven from his kingdom, he not only felt depressed as an exile and wanderer; but he would recollect his own sin as punished in the affliction. Eli had not only to suffer the pangs of a father in the loss of his sons; but he would recal, with bitterness of spirit, his own mismanagement, if bringing up these sons. St. Paul had not only to endure the thorn in the flesh; but he would feel that he carried about him propensities to self-exaltation, which rendered that thorn necessary and salutary

DAUGHTY PRECIPITATIONS are the brinks of temptations. A man often gives evidence to others that he is giddy, though he is not aware of it, perhaps, himself. Whoever has been in danger himself, will guess very shrewdly concerning the dangerous state of such a man.

A *haughty spirit* is a symptom of extreme danger—*A haughty spirit goeth before a fall.*

Presumptuous carelessness indicates danger.

"Who fears!" This is to be feared, that you feel no cause of fear. Such was Peter's state: *Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I.*

Venturing on the borders of danger is much akin to this. A man goes on pretty well till he ventures within the atmosphere of danger. But the atmosphere of danger infatuates him. The ship is got within the influence of the vortex, and will not obey the helm. David was sitting in this atmosphere on the housetop, and was ensnared and fell.

An *accession of wealth* is a dangerous predicament for a man. At first he is stunned, if the accession be sudden: he is very humble and very grateful. Then he begins to speak a little louder, people think him more sensible, and soon he thinks himself so.

A man is in imminent danger when in *suspected circumstances* he is disposed to equivocate, as Abraham did with Pharaoh, and Isaac with Abimelech.

Stupidity of conscience under chastisement—an advancement to power, when a man begins to relish such power—popularity—self-indulgence—a disposition to gad about, like Dinah: all these are symptoms of spiritual danger.

A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES in our condition of life is a critical period. No man who has not passed through such a change, can form any adequate notion of its effects upon the mind. When money comes into the pocket of a poor man in small sums, it goes out as it came in, and more follows it in the same way; and with a certain freedom and indifference, it is applied to its proper uses: but when he begins to receive round sums, that may yield him an interest, and when this interest comes to be added to his principal, and the sweets of augmentation to creep over him, it is quite a new world to him. In a rise of circumstances, too, the man becomes, in his own opinion, a wiser man, a greater man; and pride of station crosses him in his way. Nor is the contrary change less dangerous. Poverty has its trials. That is a fine trait in the Pilgrim's Progress, that Christian stumbled in going down the Hill into the Valley of Humiliation.

A sound head, a simple heart, and a spirit dependant on Christ, will suffice to conduct us in every variety of circumstances.

I CANNOT look through my past life without trembling. A variation in my circumstances has been attended with dangers and difficulties, little of which I saw at the time compared with what reflection has since shown me, but which in the review of them make me shud

der, and ought to fill me with gratitude. He, who views this subject aright, will put up particular prayer against sudden attacks.

GOD will have the Christian thoroughly humbled and dependant. Strong minds think, perhaps, sometimes, that they can effect great things in experience by keeping themselves girt up, by the recurrence of habit, by vigorous exertion. This is their unquestionable duty. But God often strips them, lest they should grow confident. He lays them bare—He makes them feel poor, dark, impotent. He seems to say, "Strive with all your vigor, but yet I am he that worketh all in all."

THERE is no calling or profession, however ensnaring in many respects to a Christian mind, provided it be not in itself simply unlawful, wherein God has not frequently raised up faithful witnesses, who have stood forth for examples to others, in like situations, of the practicability of uniting great eminence in the Christian life with the discharge of the duties of their profession, however difficult.

FEAR has the most steady effect on the constitutional temperament of some Christians, to keep them in their course. A strong sense of DUTY fixes on the minds of others, and is the prevailing principle of conduct, without any direct reference to consequences. On minds of a stubborn, refractory, and self-willed temper, fear and duty have in general little effect: they brave fear, and a mere sense of duty is a cold and lifeless principle; but GRATITUDE, under a strong and subduing sense of mercies, melts them into obedience.

THERE is a large class, who would confound nature and grace. These are chiefly women. They sit at home, nursing themselves over a fire, and then trace up the natural effects of solitude and want of air and exercise into spiritual desertion. There is more pride in this than they are aware of. They are unwilling to allow so simple and natural a cause of their feelings; and wish to find something in the thing more sublime.

THERE are so many things to lower a man's topsails—he is such a dependant creature—he is to pay such court to his stomach, his food, his sleep, his exercise—that, in truth, a hero is an idle word. Man seems formed to be a hero in suffering—not a hero in action. Men err in nothing more than in their estimate which they make of human labor. The hero of the world is the man that makes a bustle—the man that makes the road smoke under his chaise-and-four—the man that raises a dust about him—the man that manages or devastates empires! But what is the real labor of this man, compared with that of a silent sufferer? He lives on his projects. He encounters, perhaps, rough roads—incommodious inns—bad food—storms and perils—weary days and sleepless nights:—but what are

these!—his project—his point—the thing that has laid hold on his heart—glory—a name—consequence—pleasure—wealth—these render the man callous to the pains and efforts of the body! I have been in both states, and, therefore, understand them; and I know that men form this false estimate. Besides—there is something in bustle, and stir, and activity, that supports itself. At one period, I preached and read five times on a Sunday, and rode sixteen miles. But what did it cost me? Nothing! Yet most men would have looked on while I was rattling from village to village, with all the dogs barking at my heels, and would have called me a hero: whereas, if they were to look at me now, they would call me an idle, lounging fellow. "He makes a sermon on the Saturday—he gets into his study—he walks from end to end—he scribbles on a scrap of paper—he throws it away and scribbles on another—he takes snuff—he sits down—scribbles again—walks about." The man cannot see that here is an exhaustion of the spirit, which, at night, will leave me worn to the extremity of endurance. He cannot see the numberless efforts of mind, which are crossed and stifled, and recoil on the spirits, like the fruitless efforts of a traveller to get firm footing among the ashes on the steep sides of Mount Etna.*

ELIJAH appears to have been a man of what we call a GREAT SPIRIT: yet we never find him rising against the humiliating methods which God was sometimes pleased to take with him; whether he is to depend for his daily food on the ravens, or is to be nourished by the slender pittance of a perishing widow. Pride would choose for us such means of provision, as have some appearance of our own agency in them; and stout-heartedness would lead us to refuse things, if we cannot have them in our own way.

THE blessed man is he who is under deucation in God's school; where he endures chastisement, and by chastisement is instructed. The foolish creature is bewitched, sometimes with the enchantments and sorceries of life. He begins to lose the lively sense of that something, which is superior to the glory of the world. His grovelling soul begins to say, "Is not this fine! Is not that charming! Is not that noble house worth a wish! Is not that equipage worth a sigh?" He must go to the word of God to know what a thing is worth. He must be taught there to call things by their proper names. If he have lost this habit, when his heart puts the questions he will answer them like a fool; as I have done a thousand times. He will forget that God puts his children into possession of these things, as mere stewards; and that the possession of them increases their responsibility. He will sit down and plan, and scheme to obtain possession of things, which he forgets are to be burnt and destroyed. But God dashes the fond scheme

* See the Adventurer, No. cxxvii.—J. P.

in pieces. He disappoints the project. And, with the chastisement he sends instruction; for he knows that the silly creature, if left to himself, would begin, like the spider whose web has been swept away, to spin again. And then the man sees that Job is blessed—not when God gives him sons and daughters, and flocks and herds, and power, and honor; but when God takes all these away—not when the schemes of his carnal heart are indulged; but when they are crossed and disappointed. A STUBBORN and rebellious mind in a Christian, must be kept low by dark and trying dispensations. The language of God, in his providence, to such an one, is generally of this kind: “I will not wholly hide myself. I will be seen by thee. But thou shalt never meet me, except in a dark night and in a storm.” Ministers of such a natural spirit are often fitted for eminent usefulness by these means.

THE Christian, in his sufferings, is often tempted to think himself forgotten. But his affections are the clearest proofs that he is an object both of Satan’s enmity, and of God’s fatherly discipline. Satan would not have man suffer a single trouble all his life long, if he might have his way. He would give him the thing his heart is set upon. He would work in with his ambition. He would pamper his lusts and his pride. But God has better things in reserve for his children: and they must be brought to desire them and seek them; and this will be through the wreck and sacrifice of all that the heart holds dear. The Christian prays for fuller manifestations of Christ’s power and glory and love to him; but he is often not aware that this is, in truth, praying to be brought into the furnace; for in the furnace only it is that Christ can walk with his friends, and display, in their preservation and deliverance, his own almighty power. Yet when brought thither, it is one of the worst parts of the trial, that the Christian often thinks himself, for a time at least, abandoned. Job thought so. But while he looked on himself as an outcast, the infinite Spirit and the wicked Spirit were holding a dialogue on his case! He was more an object of notice and interest, than the largest armies that were ever assembled, and the mightiest revolutions that ever shook the world, considered merely in their temporal interests and consequences. Let the Christian be deeply concerned, in all his trials, to honor his Master before such observers!

AFFLICTION has a tendency, especially if long continued, to generate a kind of despondency and ill-temper: and spiritual incapacity is closely connected with pain and sickness. The spirit of prayer does not necessarily come with affliction. If this be not poured out upon the man, he will, like a wounded beast, skulk to his den and growl there.

GOD has marked IMPLICITNESS AND SIMPLICITY OF FAITH with peculiar approbation. He has done this throughout the Scripture; and he is doing it daily in the Christian life. An unsus-

pecting, unquestioning, unhesitating spirit, he delights to honor. He does not delight in a credulous, weak, and unstable mind. He gives us full evidence, when he calls and leads; but he expects to find in us—what he himself bestows—an open ear and disposed heart. Though he gives us not the evidence of sense; yet he gives such evidence as will be heard by an open ear, and followed by a disposed heart:—*Thomas! because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* We are witnesses what an open ear and a disposed heart will do in men of the world. If wealth is in pursuit—if a place presents itself before them—if their persons and families and affairs are the object—a whisper, a hint, a probability, a mere chance, is a sufficient ground of action. It is this very state of mind, with regard to religion, which God delights in and honors. He seems to put forth his hand, and to say—“Put thy hand into mine. Follow all my leadings. Keep thyself attentive to every turn.”

A SOUND heart is an excellent casuist. Men stand doubting what they shall do, while an evil heart is at the bottom. If, with St. Paul, they simply did *one thing*, the way would be plain. A miser, or an ambitious man, knows his points; and he has such a simplicity in the pursuit of them, that you seldom find him at a loss about the steps which he should take to attain them. He has acquired a sort of instinctive habit in his pursuit. Simplicity and rectitude would have prevented a thousand schisms in the church; which have generally risen from men having something else in plan and prospect, and not the *one thing*.

WHAT *I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter*—is the unwearied language of God, in his providence. He will have CREDIT every step. He will not assign reasons, because he will exercise faith.

PRIDE urges men to inquire into the PHILOSOPHY of divine truth. They are not contented, for example, with the account which the Bible gives of the origin of evil, and its actual influence on mankind; but they would supply what God has left untold. They would explain the fitness and propriety of things. A mathematician may summon his scholars round his chair, and from self-evident principles deduce and demonstrate his conclusions: he has axioms; but concerning evil we have none. A Christian may say on this subject, as Sir Christopher Wren did concerning the roof of King’s College Chapel—“Show me how to fix the first stone, and I will finish the building.”—“Explain the origin of evil, and I will explain every other difficulty respecting evil.” We are placed in a disposition and constitution of things, under a righteous Governor. If we will not rest satisfied with this, something is wrong in our state of mind. It is a solid satisfaction to every man who has been seduced into foolish inquiries, that it is utterly impossible to advance one inch by them. He must

come back to rest in God's appointment; he must come back to sit patiently, meekly, and with docility, at the feet of a teacher.

DUTIES are ours: events are God's. This removes an infinite burden from the shoulders of a miserable, tempted, dying creature. On this consideration only, can he securely lay down his head and close his eyes.

THE Christian often thinks, and schemes, and talks, like a practical Atheist. His eye is so conversant with second causes, that the great Mover is little regarded. And yet those sentiments and that conduct of others, by which his affairs are influenced, are not formed by chance and at random. They are attracted toward the system of his affairs, or repelled from them, by the highest power. We talk of attraction in the universe; but there is no such thing, as we are accustomed to consider it. The natural and moral worlds are held together in their respective operations by an incessant administration. It is the mighty grasp of a controlling hand, which keeps every thing in its station. Were this control suspended, there is nothing adequate to the preservation of harmony and affection between my mind and that of my dearest friend, for a single hour.

LORD Chesterfield tells his son, that when he entered into the world, and heard the conjectures and notions about public affairs, he was surprised at their folly; because he was in the secret, and knew what was passing in the cabinet. We negotiate. We make treaties. We make war. We cry for peace. We have public hopes and fears. We distrust one minister, and we repose on another. We recall one general or admiral, because he has lost the national confidence, and we send out another with a full tide of hopes and expectations. We find something in men and measures, as the sufficient cause of all sufferings or anticipations.—But a religious man enters the cabinet. He sees, in all public fears and difficulties, the pressure of God's hand. So long as this pressure continues, he knows that we may move heaven and earth in vain: every thing is bound up in icy fetters. But, when God removes his hand, the waters flow, measures avail, and hopes are accomplished.

WE are too apt to forget our actual dependence on providence, for the circumstances of every instant. The most trivial events may determine our state in the world. Turning up one street instead of another, may bring us into company with a person whom we should not otherwise have met; and this may lead to a train of other events, which may determine the happiness or misery of our lives.

LIGHT may break in upon a man after he has taken a particular step; but he will not condemn himself for the step taken in a less de-

gree of light: he may hereafter see still better than he now does, and have reason to alter his opinion again. It is enough to satisfy us of our duty, if we are conscious that, at the time we take a step, we have an adequate motive. If we are conscious of a wrong motive, or of a rash proceeding, for such steps we must expect to suffer.

Trouble or difficulty befalling us after any particular step, is not, of itself, an argument that the step was wrong. A storm overtook the disciples in the ship; but this was no proof that they had done wrong to go on board. Esau met Jacob, and occasioned him great fear and anxiety, when he left Laban; but this did not prove him to have done wrong in the step which he had taken. Difficulties are no ground of presumption against us, when we did not run into them in following our own will: yet the Israelites were with difficulty convinced that they were in the path of duty, when they found themselves shut in by the Red Sea. Christians, and especially ministers, must expect troubles: it is in this way that God leads them: he conducts them "*per ardua ad astra*." They would be in imminent danger if the multitude at all times cried *Hosanna*!

We must remember that we are short-sighted creatures. We are like an unskilful chess-player, who takes the next piece, while a skilful one looks further. He, who *sees the end from the beginning*, will often appoint us a most inexplicable way to walk in. Joseph was put into the pit and the dungeon: but this was the way which led to the throne.

We often want to know too much and too soon. We want the light of to-morrow, but it will not come till to-morrow. And then a slight turn, perhaps, will throw such light on our path, that we shall be astonished we saw not our way before. "I can wait," says Lavater. This is a high attainment. We must labor, therefore, to be quiet in that path, from which we cannot recede without danger and evil.

THERE is not a nobler sight in the world than an aged and experienced Christian, who, having been sifted in the sieve of temptation, stands forth as a confirmer of the assaulted—testifying, from his own trials, the reality of religion; and meeting, by his warnings and directions and consolations, the cases of all who may be tempted to doubt it.

THE Christian expects his reward, not as due to merit; but as connected, in a constitution of grace, with those acts which grace enables him to perform. The pilgrim, who has been led to the gate of heaven, will not knock there as worthy of being admitted; but the gate shall open to him, because he is brought thither. He who *sows, even with tears, the precious seed of faith, hope, and love, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him*; because it is in the very nature of that seed to yield, under the kindly influence secured to it, a joyful harvest.

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

On a Minister's qualifying himself for his Office.

WHEN a young minister sets out, he should sit down and ask himself HOW HE MAY BEST QUALIFY HIMSELF FOR HIS OFFICE.

How does a physician qualify himself? It is not enough that he offers to feel the pulse. He must read, and inquire, and observe, and make experiments, and correct himself again and again. He must lay in a stock of medical knowledge before he begins to feel the pulse.

The minister is a physician of a far higher order. He has a vast field before him. He has to study an infinite variety of constitutions. He is to furnish himself with the knowledge of the whole system of remedies. He is to be a man of skill and expedient. If one thing fail, he must know how to apply another. Many intricate and perplexed cases will come before him: it will be disgraceful to him not to be prepared for such. His patients will put many questions to him: it will be disgraceful to him not to be prepared to answer them. He is a merchant embarking in extensive concerns. A little ready money in the pocket will not answer the demands that will be made upon him. Some of us seem to think it will. But they are grossly deceived. There must be a well furnished account at the banker's.

But it is not all gold that glitters. A young minister must learn to separate and select his materials. A man who talks to himself will find out what suits the heart of man: some things respond: they ring again. Nothing of this nature is lost on mankind: it is worth its weight in gold, for the service of a minister. He must remark, too, what it is that puzzles and distracts the mind: all this is to be avoided: it may wear the garb of deep research, and great acumen, and extensive learning; but it is nothing to the mass of mankind.

One of the most important considerations in making a sermon, is to disembarass it as much as possible. The sermons of the last century were like their large unwieldy chairs. Men have now a far more true idea of a chair. They consider it as a piece of furniture to sit upon, and they cut away from it every thing that embarrasses and encumbers it. It requires as much reflection and wisdom to know what is not to be put into a sermon, as what is.

A young minister should likewise look round him, that he may see what has succeeded and what has not. Truth is to be his companion, but he is to clothe her so as to gain her access. Truth must never bow to fashion or prejudice; but her garb may be varied. No man was ever eminently successful in his ministry, who did not make Truth his friend. Such a man might not see her, indeed, in all her beauty and proportions; but, certainly, he saw and loved her. A young minister should remember that she does not wear the dress of a party. Wherever she is, she is one and the same, however variously men may array her. He who is ignorant of her prominent and distinguishing fea-

tures, is like a musician who plays half score: it grates on every well-formed ear; as fatal error finds no corresponding vibration in the renewed heart. Truth forms an immediate acquaintance with such a heart, by a certain fitness and suitableness to its state and feelings. She is something different from the picture which a Churchman draws of her. A Dissenter misses her perfect figure. A Frenchman distorts her features in one way, and an Englishman in another. Every one makes his own cast and color too essential to her.

Knowledge, then, and truth, are to be the constant aim of a young minister. But where shall he find them? Let him learn from a fool, if a fool can teach him any thing. Let him be every where, and always a learner. He should imitate Gainsborough. Gainsborough transfused nature into his landscapes, beyond almost any of his contemporaries: because Gainsborough was every where the painter. Every remarkable feature or position of a tree—every fine stroke of nature—was copied into his pocket-book on the spot; and, in his next picture, appeared with a life and vivacity and nature, which no strength of memory or imagination could have supplied.

There is a certain wise way, too, in which he should accustom himself to look down on the pursuits of all other men. No man of eminence in his profession is destitute of such a partial feeling for his profession, though his judgment may remonstrate with him thereon, as an unfounded partiality. The minister, however, is required so to view all other pursuits. He alone is the man whose aim is eternity. He alone is the man whose office and profession, in all their parts, are raised into dignity and importance, by their direct reference to eternity. For eternity he schemes, and plans, and labors.

He should become a philosopher also. He should make experiments on himself and others, in order to find out what will produce effect. He is a fisherman; and the fisherman must fit himself to his employment. If some fish will bite only by day, he must fish by day: if others will bite only by moon-light, he must fish for them by moon-light. He has an engine to work, and it must be his most assiduous endeavor to work his engine to the full extent of its powers: and, to find out its powers, is the first step toward success and effect. Many men play admirably on the organ, if you would allow to them that there is no difference between an organ and a harpsichord, but they have utterly mistaken its powers. Combination is the unrivalled excellence of the organ; and therefore he only can display its powers, who studies the chords and stops in all their infinite variety of resolution and composition, rather than the rapid motion of his fingers only.

But all the minister's efforts will be vain or worse than vanity, if he have not Unction must come down from heaven to spread a savor and relish and feeling in his ministry. And, among all the other qualifications for his office, the

hold the first place, and the last also must be given to *the word of God and prayer.*

On the Assistance which a Minister has reason to expect in the Discharge of his Public Duty.

MEN have carried their views on this subject to extremes. Enthusiasts have said that learning, and that studying and writing sermons, have injured the church. The accurate men have said, "Go and hear one of these enthusiasts hold forth!"

But both classes may be rendered useful. Let each correct its evils, yet do its work in its own way.

Some men set up exorbitant notions about accuracy. But exquisite accuracy is totally lost on mankind. The greater part of those who hear, cannot be brought to see the points of the accurate man. The Scriptures are not written in this manner. I should advise a young minister to break through all such cobwebs, as these unphilosophical men would spin round him. An humble and modest man is silenced, if he sees one of these critics before him. He should say, "I am God's servant. To my own master I stand or fall. I will labor according to the utmost ability which God giveth, and leave all consequences to him."

We are especially taught in the New Testament to glorify the Spirit of God; and, in his gracious operations in our ministry, we are nearer the apostolic times than we often think ourselves. But this assistance is to be expected by us, as laborers in the vineyard; not as rhapsodists. Idle men may be pointed out, who have abused the doctrine of divine assistance; but what has not been abused! We must expect a special blessing to accompany the truth: not to supersede labor, but to rest on and accompany labor.

A minister is to be *in season, and out of season*; and, therefore, every where a minister. He will not employ himself in writing secular histories: he will not busy himself in prosecuting mathematical inquiries. He will labor directly in his high calling: and indirectly, in a vast variety of ways, as he may be enabled: and God may bless that word in private, which may have been long heard in public in vain.

A minister should satisfy himself in saying, "It matters not what men think of my talents. Am I doing what I can?"—for there is great encouragement in that commendation of our Lord, *She hath done what she could.* It would betray a wrong state of mind to say, "If I had discharged my duty in such and such a way, I should have succeeded." This is a carnal spirit. If God bless the simple manner in which you spoke, that will do good; if not, no manner of speaking could have done it.

There is such a thing in the religious world as a cold, carnal wisdom; every thing must be nicely weighed in the scales: every thing must be exactly measured by the rule. I question if this is not worse, in its consequences, than the enthusiasm which it opposes. Both are evil and to be shunned. But I scarcely ever

knew a preacher or writer of this class who did much good.

We are to go forth, expecting the *excellency of God's power* to accompany us, since we are but *earthen vessels*: and if, in the apostolic days, diligence was necessary, how much more requisite is it now!

But, to the exercise of this diligence, a sufficiency in all things is promised. What does a minister require? In all these respects, the promise is applicable to him. He needs, for instance, courage and patience: he may, therefore, expect that the Holy Spirit will enable him for the exercise of these graces.

A minister may expect more superintendence, more elevation, than a hearer. It can scarcely be questioned that he ought to pray for this; if so, he has a ground in Scripture thus to pray.

I have been cured of expecting the Holy Spirit's influence without due preparation on our part, by observing how men preach who take up that error. I have heard such men talk nonsense by the hour.

We must combine Luther with St. Paul—"Bene orasse est bene studuisse," must be united with St. Paul's *Meditate upon these things: give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.* One errs who says, "I will preach a reputable sermon:" and another errs who says, "I will leave all to the assistance of the Holy Spirit," while he has neglected a diligent preparation.

On Preaching Christ.

We preach Christ crucified—1 Cor. i. 23.

CHRIST is God's great ordinance. Nothing ever has been done, or will be done to purpose, but so far as he is held forth with simplicity. All the lines must centre in him. I feel this in my own experience, and therefore I govern my ministry by it: but then this is to be done *according to the analogy of faith*—not ignorantly, absurdly, and falsely. I doubt not, indeed, but that excess on this side is less pernicious than excess on the other; because God will bless his own especial ordinance, though partially understood and partially exhibited.

THERE are many weighty reasons for rendering Christ prominent in our ministry:—

1. *Christ cheers the prospect.* Every thing connected with him has light and gladness thrown round it. I look out of my window:—the scene is scowling—dark—frigid—forbidding: I shudder—my heart is chilled. But let the sun break forth from the cloud—I can feel—I can act—I can spring.

2. *God descending and dwelling with man, is a truth so infinitely grand, that it must absorb all other.* "You are his attendants! Well! but the king! There he is!—The king!"

3. *Out of Christ God is not intelligible, much less amiable.* Such men as Clarke and Abernethy talk sublime nonsense. A sick woman said to me—"Sir! I have no notion of God. I can form no notion of him. You talk to me about him, but I cannot get a single idea that

seems to contain any thing.'—'But you know how to conceive of Jesus Christ as a man! God comes down to you in him, full of kindness and condescension.'—'Ah! Sir, that gives me something to lay hold on. *There* I can rest. I understand God in his Son.' But if God is not *intelligible* out of Christ, much less is he *amiable*, though I ought to feel him so. He is an object of horror and aversion to me, corrupted as I am! I fear—I tremble—I resist—I hate—I rebel.

4. *A preacher may pursue his topic, without being led by it to Christ.* A man who is accustomed to investigate topics is in danger. He takes up his topic and pursues it. He takes up another and pursues it. At length Jesus Christ becomes his topic, and then he pursues that. If he cannot so feel and think as to bend all subjects naturally and gracefully to Christ, he must seek his remedy in selecting such as are more evangelical.

5. *God puts peculiar honor on the preaching of Christ crucified.* A philosopher may philosophize his hearers, but the preaching of Christ must convert them. John the Baptist will make his hearers tremble; but, if *the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he*, let him exhibit that peculiar feature of his superiority—Jesus Christ. Men may preach Christ ignorantly—blunderingly—absurdly: yet God will give it efficacy, because he is determined to magnify his own ordinance.

6. *God seems, in the doctrine of the cross, to design the destruction of man's pride.* Even the murderer and the adulterer sometimes become subjects of the grace of the Gospel, because the murderer and adulterer are more easily convinced and humbled: but the man of virtue is seldom reached, because the man of virtue disdains to descend. *Remember me, saved a dying malefactor!—God, I thank Thee, condemned a proud Pharisee!*

EVERY minister should, therefore, inquire, "WHAT IS FOR ME THE WISEST WAY OF PREACHING CHRIST TO MEN?" Some seem to think that in the choice of a wise way, there lurks always a TRIMMING disposition. There ARE men, doubtless, who will sacrifice to self, even *Christ Jesus the Lord*: but they, of all men, are farthest from the thing. There is a secret in doing it, which none but an honest man can discover. The knave is not half wise enough.

We are not to judge one another in these things. Sufficient it is to us, to know what we have to do. There are different ways of doing the same thing, and that with success and acceptance. We see this in the apostles themselves. They not only preached Christ in different ways; but, what is more, they could not do this like one another. They declare this fact themselves; and acknowledge the grace of God in their respective gifts. *Our beloved brother Paul writes*, says St. Peter, *according to the wisdom given unto him*. But there are Peters in our days, who would say—"Paul is too learned. Away with these things, which are hard to be understood. He

should be more simple. I dislike all this reasoning." And there are Pauls, who would say, "Peter is rash and unguarded. He should put a curb on his impetuosity." And there are Johns, who would say, "They should both discharge their office in my soft and winning manner. No good will come of this fire and noise." Nothing of this sort! *Each hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, and another after that*: and each seems only desirous to occupy faithfully till his Master come, leaving his brethren to stand or fall to their own Master.

Too much dependance is often placed on a system of RATIONAL CONTRIVANCE. An ingenious man thinks he can so manage to preach Christ, that his hearers will say—"Here is nothing of methodism! This has nothing to do with that system!" I will venture to say, if this is the sentiment communicated by his ministry, that he has not delivered his message. The people do not know what he means, or he has kept back part of God's truth. He has fallen on a carnal contrivance, to avoid a cross, and he does no good to souls. THE WHOLE MESSAGE must be delivered; and it is better it should be delivered even coarsely, than not at all. We may lay it down as a principle—That if the Gospel be a MEDICINE, and a SPECIFIC TOO—as it is—it must be got down SUCH AS IT IS. Any attempt to sophisticate and adulterate will deprive it of its efficacy: and will often recoil on the man who makes the attempt, to his shame and confusion. The Jesuits tried to render Christianity palatable to the Chinese by adulterating it; but the Jesuits were driven with abhorrence from the empire.

If we have to deal with men of learning, let us show learning so far as to demonstrate that it bears its testimony to the truth. But accommodation in manner must often spring from humility. We must condescend to the capacity of men, and make the truth intelligible to them.

If this be our manner of preaching Christ, we must make up our minds not to regard the little caviller who will judge us by the standard of his favorite author or preacher. We must be cautious, too, since men of God have been and ever will be the butt and scorn of the world, of thinking that we can escape its snares and its censures. It is a foolish project—To AVOID GIVING OFFENCE; but it is our duty to avoid giving UNNECESSARY offence. It is necessary offence, if it is given by the truth; but it is unnecessary, if our own spirit occasion it.

I have often thought that St. Paul was raised up peculiarly to be an example to others, in laboring to discover the wisest way of exhibiting the Gospel; not only that he was to be a great pattern in other points, but designedly raised up for this very thing. How does he labor to make the truth REASONABLY PLAIN!—How does he strain every nerve and ransack every corner of the heart, to make it REASONABLY PALATABLE! We need not be instructed in his particular meaning, when he says, *I became all things to all men, if by any means I*

might save some. His history is a comment on the declaration.

The knowledge of Jesus Christ is a wonderful mystery. Some men think they preach Christ gloriously, because they name him every two minutes in their sermons. But that is not preaching Christ. To understand, and enter into, and open his various offices and characters—the glories of his person and work—his relation to us, and ours to him, and to God the Father and God the Spirit through him—this is the knowledge of Christ. The divines of the present day are stunted dwarfs in this knowledge, compared with the great men of the last age. To know Jesus Christ for ourselves, is to make him a CONSOLATION,—DELIGHT,—STRENGTH,—RIGHTEOUSNESS,—COMPANION,—and END.

This is the aspect in which religion should be presented to mankind: it is suited, above all other, to produce effect; and effect is our object. We must take human nature as we find human nature. We must take human nature in great cities, as we find human nature in great cities. We may say—"THIS OR THAT is the aspect which ought to have most effect: we must illuminate the mind: we must enlist the reason: we must attack the conscience." We may do all this, and yet our comparative want of success in begetting and educating the sons of glory, may demonstrate to us that there is some more effective way: and that sound sense and philosophy call on us to adopt that way, BECAUSE it is the most effective.

Our system of preaching must meet mankind: they must find it POSSIBLE to live in the bustle of the world, and yet serve God: after being worried and harassed with its concerns, let them hear cheering truths concerning Christ's love and care and pity, which will operate like an enchantment in dispelling the cares of life, and calming the anxious perturbations of conscience. Bring forward privileges and enforce duties, in their proper places and proportions.

Let there be no extremes: yet I am arrived at this conviction:—Men, who lean toward the extreme of evangelical PRIVILEGES in their ministry, do much more to the conversion of their hearers, than they do who lean toward the extreme of REQUIREMENT. And my own EXPERIENCE confirms my observation. I feel myself repelled, if any thing chills, loads, or urges me. This is my nature, and I see it to be very much the nature of other men. But, let me hear, *Son of man, thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord*—I am melted and subdued.

On a Minister's Familiar Intercourse with his Hearers.

WHAT passes, on these occasions, too often savors of this world. We become one among our hearers. They come to church on Sunday; and we preach: the week comes round again, and its nonsense with it. Now if a minister were what he should be, the people would feel it. They would not attempt to in-

troduce this silly, diurnal chat! When we countenance this, it looks as though "On the Sunday I am ready to do my business; and, in the week, you may do yours." This lowers the tone of what I say on the Sabbath. It forms a sad comment on my preaching.

I have traced, I think, some of the evil that lies at the root of this. We are more concerned to be thought gentlemen, than to be felt as ministers. Now, being desirous to be thought a man who has kept good company, strikes at the root of that rough work—the bringing of God into his own world. It is hard and rough work to bring God into his own world. To talk of a Creator, and Preserver, and Redeemer, is an outrage on the feelings of most companies.

There is important truth in what Mr. Wesley said to his preachers, when rightly understood, however it may have been ridiculed:—"You have no more to do with being gentlemen, than dancing masters." The character of a minister is far beyond that of a mere gentleman. It takes a higher walk. He will, indeed, study to be a real gentleman: he will be the farthest possible from a rude man: he will not disdain to learn nor to practise the decencies of society: but he will sustain a still higher character.

It is a snare to a minister, when in company, to be drawn out to converse largely on the state of the funds, and on the news of the day. He should know the world, and what is doing in the world, and should give things of this nature their due place and proportion; but if he can be drawn out to give twenty opinions on this or that subject of politics or literature, he is lowered in his tone. A man of sense feels something violent in the transition from such conversation to the Bible and to prayer.

Dinner visits can seldom be rendered really profitable to the mind. The company are so much occupied, that little good is to be done. A minister should show his sense of the value of time: it is a sad thing when those around him begin to yawn. He must be a man of business. It is not sufficiently considered how great the sin of idleness is. We talk in the pulpit of the value of time, but we act too little on what we say.

Let a minister, who declines associating much with his hearers, satisfy himself that he has a good reason for doing so. If reproached for not visiting them so much as they wish, let him have a just reason to assign. A man who is at work for his family, may have as much love for them as the wife, though she is always with them.

I fell into a mistake, when a young man, in thinking that I could talk with men of the world on their own ground, and could thus win them over to mine. I was fond of painting, and so talked with them on that subject. This pleased them: but I did not consider that I gave a consequence to their pursuits which does not belong to them; whereas I ought to have endeavored to raise them above these, that they might engage in higher. I did not see this at the time: but I now see it to have been a great

error. A wealthy man builds a fine house, and opens to himself fine prospects: he wants you to see them, for he is sick of them himself. They thus draw you into their schemes. A man has got ten thousand pounds: you congratulate him on it, and that without any intimation of his danger or his responsibility. Now you may tell him in the pulpit that riches are nothing worth; but you will tell him this in vain, while you tell him out of it that they are.

Lord Chesterfield says, a man's character is degraded when he is to be had. A minister ought never to be had.

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On a Minister's encouraging Animadversion on himself.

It is a serious inquiry for a minister, how far he should encourage animadversion on himself in his hearers. He will encounter many ignorant and many censorious remarks, but he may gain much on the whole.

He should lay down to himself a few principles.

It is better that a minister smart than mistake. It is better that a traveller meet a surly impertinent fellow to direct him his way, than lose his way. A minister is so important in his office, that, whatever others think of it, he should regard this, and this only, as the transaction for eternity. But a man may be laboring in the fire: he may be turning the world upside down, and yet be wrong. You say he must read his Bible. True! but he must use *all* means. He must build his usefulness on this principle—if by *any* means. If the wheel hitches, let him, by *any* means, discover where it hitches. This principle is to be worked continually in his mind. He must labor to keep it up to a fine, keen edge. Let him never believe that his view of himself is sufficient. A merchant sailing in quest of gain, is so intent on his object, that he will take a hint from any man. If we had all the meaning to which we pretend in our pursuits, we should feel and act like him.

A minister must lay it down also as a principle, that *he will never sufficiently understand his own pride and self-love; and that confidence in his own sense, which cleaves closely to every man.* He must consider this as the general malady. Man is blind and obstinate—poor and proud. This silly creature, through ignorance of this principle, will not only not hear a vulgar hearer, who animadvert on him; but he will scarcely listen to a superior man among his hearers. He attends to such a one, because it would be indecent not to attend. But he finds some excuse for himself in his own bosom. He reverences what is said very little, if at all. He strokes and flatters himself, and makes up the affair very well in his own mind.

A minister should consider *how much more easily a weak man can read a wise man, than a wise man can read himself*: and that for this reason—no man can see and hear himself. He is too much formed in his own habits—his family notions—his closet notions—to detect

himself. He, who stands by and sees a game played, has vast advantages over the players. Besides, preachers err systematically—learnedly—scientifically. The simple hearer has an appeal to nature in his heart. He can often feel that his minister is wrong, when he is not able to set him right. Dr. Manton, no doubt, thought he had preached well, and as became him, before the Lord Mayor; but he felt himself reproved and instructed, when a poor man pulled him by the sleeve, and told him he had understood nothing of his sermon; there was an appeal in this poor man's breast to nature: nature could not make any thing of the Doctor's learning. When Apelles took his stand behind his picture, he was a wise man: and he was a wise man too, when he altered the shoe on the hint of the cobbler: the cobbler, in his place, was to be heard.

A minister should consider, too, that *few will venture to speak to a public man.* It is a rare thing to hear a man say—"Upon my word that thing, or your general manner, is defective or improper." If a wise man says this, he shows a regard, which the united stock of five hundred flatterers will not equal. I would set down half the blunders of ministers to their not listening to animadversion. I have heard it said—for the men, who would animadvert on us, talk among themselves, if we refuse to let them talk to us—I have heard it said, "Why don't you talk to him?"—"Why don't you talk to him! because he will not hear!"

Let him consider, moreover, that *this aversion from reproof is not wise.* This is a symptom of the disease. Why should he want this hushing up of the disorder? This is a mark of a little mind. A great man can afford to lose: a little insignificant fellow is afraid of being snuffed out.

A minister mistakes who should refuse to read any anonymous letters. He may, perhaps, see nothing in them the first time; but, let him read them again and again. The writer raises his superstructure, probably, on a slight basis; yet there is generally some sort of occasion. If he points out but a small error, yet that is worth detecting.

In the present habits of men, it is so difficult to get them to tell the naked truth, that a minister should show a disposition to be corrected: he should show himself to be sensible of the want of it. He is not to encourage idle people: that could be productive of no possible good.

These are some of the reasons for a minister's encouragement, in a judicious manner, of animadversion on himself in his hearers.

Sometimes, however, a man will come who appears to be an impertinent man, independently of what he has to remark—a man who is evidently disposed to be troublesome. Such a man came to me with—"Sir, you said such a thing that seemed to lean to the doctrine of universal redemption. Pray, Sir, may I speak a little with you on that subject?" The manner of the man at once marked his character. He seemed to bring with him this kind of sentiment—"I'll go and set that man right.

"I'll call that man to account." It was a sort of democratic insolence of mind. Instead of answering him as he expected, I treated him as a child. I turned it into an occasion of preaching a sermon to him:—"Sir, do you come to instruct me, or to be instructed? Before we enter on a question which has exercised the greatest men, we want a preparedness of mind: we want a deep humility—a teachableness—a spirit of dependance—of which you seem to me to have but little."

On the other hand, a man may come, quite as ignorant as the other, yet a simple character. I have distressed him. Though he cannot, perhaps, be made to understand what he inquires about—yet a minister should say to himself, "Have I puzzled him? He is wounded, and he comes for help."

A minister should remember that he is not always to act and speak authoritatively. He sits on his friend's chair, and his friend says his things to him with frankness. They may want perhaps a little decorum; but he should receive them in the most friendly and good-humored way in the world. A thing strikes this man and that man: he may depend on it, that it has some foundation.

But there are persons, whom a minister should more than encourage to animadvert on him. He should employ them. He should explain himself to them. He does not merely want an account of his sermon, but he employs them on business. To such sensible persons, he will say—"What serious judgment do you form of my preaching? Do tell me what sort of a man I am."

A minister has to treat with another sort of hearers—uncandid men, and yet men of capacity: a sort of men, who are not now pleased, and then displeased. They spy a blot every where. He is likely to make a mistake with regard to such men:—"What signifies the opinion of that man? That man can never be pleased." True! that man cannot be pleased; but it does not follow that he tells you no truth. In treating with such a man he should say—His edge may be too keen for candor and sound judgment; yet, if it lays open to me what I could not otherwise see, let me improve by its keenness. What hurt can he do to me? He may damp or irritate others, by talking thus to them: but let me learn what is to be learnt from him." Such a man lifts a minister from his standing, where he settles down too easily and firmly. If I know a man to be of this class, I will distinguish: "This is the man: but that is myself!" If I would write a book to stand the fire, let me find out the severest censor. My friend is but half the man: there is a consentaneousness of sentiment between us: we have fallen in together, till we scarcely know how to differ from each other. Let the man come who says—"Here I can discover you to yourself; and there!" The best hints are obtained from snarling people. Medicaments make the patient smart, but they heal.

Yet a minister must not take this in the gross. He is not to invite rude men round his

door. If he suffer his hearers to treat him irreverently, if he allow them to dispute with him on every occasion, he will bring ruin on the Church. *The priest's lips must keep knowledge.* If a parent allow his children to question every thing, so that nothing is to be settled without a hundred proofs, they will soon despise their teacher, for they will think themselves able to teach him. The minister must have decided superiority and authority, or he will want one of the principal qualities of his ministry. This is not inconsistent with receiving hints. He may mistake in some things: but he should mark the complexion of his congregation in deciding how far they are to be heard on his mistakes. If the people are heady, forward, confident in their own sense, they are never to be encouraged. They are gone too far.

On the Limits which a Minister should put to the indulgence of his curiosity with regard to Public Exhibitions.

An extreme is to be avoided. Some persons would condemn even rational curiosity. But *the works of the Lord are great: sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.* I would not object, therefore, to visit the museum; or to go to see the rare natural productions often exhibited. I would enlarge, too, my views of man and the world by frequenting the panoramas of cities. And, though I would not run after every sight, yet I would use my liberty in selecting. But some are in an opposite extreme. They are found every where. But he, who sustains a character of a *scribe of the kingdom of heaven*, ought not to be found every where. The man, who is *seeking a heavenly country*, will show the spirit of one whose *conversation* is there.

There is something in religion, when rightly apprehended, that is masculine and grand. It removes those little desires, which are "the constant hectic of a fool."

Every thing of the drama, and whatever is so distinctly *the course of this world*, must be shunned. If a minister take one step into the world, his hearers will take two. Much may be learnt from the sentiments of men of the world. If a man of this character who heard me preach, should meet me where he would say, "Why, I did not expect to see you here!"—then he ought not to have seen me there.

There must be measure and proportion in our attention to arts and sciences. These were the very idols of the heathen world: and what are *THEY*, who now follow them with an idolatrous eagerness, but like children, who are charmed with the sparkling of a rocket, and yet see nothing in the sun?

Yet I would not indulge a cynical temper. If I go through a gentleman's gallery of pictures, I would say, "This is an admirable Claude!" but I would take occasion to drop a hint of something higher and better, and to make it felt that I fell in with these things rather incidentally than purposely. But all this must be done with tenderness and humility

"I tread on the pride of Plato," said Diogenes, as he walked over Plato's carpet: "Yes—and with more pride," said Plato.

"THEY pass best over the world," said Queen Elizabeth, "who trip over it quickly: for it is but a bog. If we stop, we sink."

I would not make it my criterion—"Christ would not come hither!" I must take a lower standard in these things. I am a poor creature, and must be contented to learn in many places and by many scenes, which Christ need not to have frequented.

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On the Means of promoting a Spirit of Devotion in Congregations.

LET us ask, "What is man?" He is a creature of feeling, as well as of intellect. We must interest him as we can. It is unphilosophical to depend on the mere statement of truth. No doubt there is a contrary error: for what is the end of exciting attention, if there is nothing deserving attention?

It is one of the first importance to PUT MEANING into every part of the service. In either extreme, of appealing to the understanding or the feelings, there may be no meaning: in a dull and lifeless preacher, there is no meaning; and in one of a contrary character, there may be nothing worthy of the name.

There is, besides, TOO LITTLE ATTENTION, in many churches, TO MAN, AS MAN. I would consult his convenience in all lawful points. If he could sit easier on cushions, he should have cushions. I would not tell him to be warm in God's service, while I leave him to shiver with cold. No doors should creak: no windows should rattle.

Music has an important effect on devotion. Wherever fantastical music enters, it betrays a corrupt principle. A congregation cannot enter into it; or, if it does, it cannot be a Christian congregation. Wherever there is an attempt to set off the music in the service, and the attempt is apparent, it is the first step toward carnality. Though there is too little life in the style of music adopted among the Moravians, yet the simplicity of Christianity pervades their devotion.

ORDER is important. Some persons, by coming in when they please, propagate a loose habit of mind. For man is a sympathetic creature; and what he sees others neglect, he is in danger of growing negligent in himself. If the reader goes through the service as though the great business for which they are assembled is not yet begun, the people will soon feel thus themselves.

The minister should take occasion frequently to impress on the people the IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK in which they are engaged. It is not enough to take it for granted that they feel this. We must take nothing for granted. Man needs to be reminded of every thing, for he soon forgets every thing.

MONOTONY must be, above all things, avoided. The mind is vagrant: monotony cannot recall it. There may be continued vehemence, while the attention is not excited; it is disturbance

and noise: there is nothing to lead the mind into a useful train of thought or feeling.

There is an opposite error to vehemence. Men of sense and literature depress devotion by treating things ABSTRACTEDLY. Simplicity, with good sense, is of unspeakable value. Religion must not be rendered abstract and curious. If a curious remark presents itself, reserve it for another place. The hearer gets away from the bustle and business of the week: he comes trembling under his fears: he would mount upward in his spirit: but a curious etymological disquisition chills and repels him.

In truth, we should be men of business in our congregations. We should endeavor both to excite and instruct our hearers. We should render the service an interesting affair in all its parts. We should rouse men: we should *bind up the broken-hearted*: we should *comfort the feeble-minded*: we should *support the weak*: we should *become all things to all men, if by any means we may save some*.

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On the Marriage of Christian Ministers.

IT seems to me, that many men do not give sufficient weight to our Lord's observations upon those who *made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, nor to St. Paul's reasoning on the subject of marriage. I would only imply, that both our Lord and the apostle seem to establish it as a principle, that a single state, when it can be chosen and is chosen for the sake of the gospel, is the superior state. This, I fear, is too much forgotten; and those men, who might have *received the saying*, and have done more service to the church of God by receiving it, have given it little or no weight in their deliberations.

And yet it ought to be considered, that the very character which would best fit men for living in a single state, would abstract them too much from the feelings and wants of their people. I am fully sensible that I should have been hardened against the distresses of my hearers, if I had not been reduced from my natural stoicism by domestic sufferings.

The cases, I allow, are extremely few, in which a man may do, on the whole, more service to the church, by imitating St. Paul, than by marrying: yet there are such cases; and it behooves every minister seriously to consider himself and his situation, before he determines on marriage. He should not regard this state as indispensably necessary to him, but should always remember, that, *ceteris paribus*, he who remains single is most worthy of honor.

But, when it is proper that a minister should marry, and he has determined to do it, how few select such women as suit their high and holy character! A minister is like a man who has undertaken to traverse the world. He has not only fair and pleasant ground to travel over, but he must encounter deserts and marshes and mountains. The traveller wants a firm and steady stay. His wife should be, above all things, a woman of faith and prayer—a woman, too, of a sound mind and of a tender heart—and one who will account it her glory

to lay herself out in co-operating with her husband, by meeting his wants and soothing his cares. She should be his unfailing resource, so far as he ought to seek this in the creature. Blessed is she, who is thus qualified and thus lives!

But, after all, the married minister, if he would live devotedly, must move in a determined sphere. Whatever his wife may be, yet she is a woman—and if things are to go on well, they must have two separate worlds. There may, indeed, be cases, when a man with something of a soft and feminine cast about his mind, may be united to a woman of a mind so superior and cultivated, that he may choose to make it his plan that they shall move in the same world. In such rare cases, it may be done with less inconvenience than in any other. But, even here, the highest end is sacrificed to feeling. Every man, whatever be his natural disposition, who would urge his powers to the highest end, must be a man of solitary studies. Some uxorious men of considerable minds have moved so much in the women's world, that reflection, disquisition, and the energies of thought, have been ruined by the habit of indulging the lighter, softer, and more playful qualities. Such a man is, indeed, the idol of the female world; but he would rather deserve to be so, if he stood upon his own ground while he attempted to meet their wants, instead of descending to mingle among them.

God has put a difference between the sexes, but education and manners have put a still greater. They are designed to move in separate spheres, but occasionally to unite together, in order to soften and relieve each other. To attempt any subversion of God's design herein, is being wiser than He who made us; and who has so established this affair that each sex has its separate and appropriate excellence—only to be attained by pursuing it in the order of nature. Thought is, or ought to be, the characterizing feature of the man, and feeling that of the woman.

Every man and woman in the world has an appropriate mind; and that in proportion to their strength of thought and feeling. Each has a way of their own—a habit—a system—a world—separated and solitary, in which no person on earth can have communion with them. Job says of God, *He knoweth the way that I take*; and, when the Christian finds a want of competency in his bosom-friend to understand and meet his way, he turns with an especial nearness and familiarity of confidence to God, who knoweth it in all its connexions and associations, its peculiarities and its imperfections.

I may be thought to speak harshly of the female character; but whatever persuasion I have of its intended distinction from that of man, I esteem a woman, who aims only to be what God designed her to be, as honorable as any man on earth. She stands not in the same order of excellence, but she is equally honorable.

But women have made themselves, and weak

men have contributed to make them, what God never designed them to be. Let any thinking man survey the female character as it now stands—often nervous, debilitated, and imaginative, and this superinduced chiefly by education and manners—and he will find it impossible that any great vigor of mind can be preserved, or any high intellectual pursuits cultivated, so far as this character stands in his way.

"DOING AS OTHERS DO," is the prevalent principle of the present female character, to whatever absurd, preposterous, masculine, or even wicked lengths it may lead. This is, so far as it avails with man or woman, the ruin, death, and grave of all that is noble, and virtuous, and praiseworthy.

A studious man, whose time is chiefly spent at home, and especially a minister, ought not to have to meet the imaginary wants of his wife. The disorders of an imaginative mind are beyond calculation. He is not worthy the name of a husband, who will not with delight nurse his wife, with all possible tenderness and love, through a real visitation, however long; but he is ruined, if he falls upon a woman of a sickly fancy. It is scarcely to be calculated what an influence the spirit of his wife will have on his own, and on all his ministerial affairs. If she comes not up to the full standard, she will so far impede him, derange him, unsanctify him.

If there is such a thing as good in this world, it is in the ministerial office. The affairs of this employment are the greatest in the world. In prosecuting these with a right spirit, the minister keeps in motion a vast machine; and, such are the incalculable consequences of his wife's character to him, that, if she assist him not in urging forward the machine, she will hang as a dead weight upon its wheels.

A woman may have a high taste: her natural temper may be peevish and fretful: she may have a delicate and fastidious mind: she may long for every thing she sees. It is not enough that she is, in reality, a pious woman. Her taste, her mind, her manners, must have a decorum and congruity to her husband's office and situation. She must bear to be crossed in her wishes for unsuitable objects: he will say, with firmness, "This shall not be. It is not enough that it would gratify you: it is wrong. It is not enough that it is not flagrantly sinful: it is improper, unsuitable to our character and station.* It is not enough that money will buy it, and I have got money: it would be a culpable use of our talent. It is not enough that your friend possesses such a thing: we stand and fall to our own Master."

On Visiting Death-beds.

I HAVE found it, in many cases, a difficult thing to deal with a DEATH-BED. We are called in to death-beds of various kinds:—

The true pilgrim sends for us to set before

* Nec, tibi quid liceat, sed quid fecisse decebit,
Occurrat.
Claudian.—J. P.

him the food on which he has fed throughout his journey. He has a keen appetite. He wants strength and vigor for the last effort; and, then, all is for ever well! He is gone home, and is at rest!

Another man sends for us because it is decent; or his friends importune him; or his conscience is alarmed: but he is ignorant of sin and of salvation: he is either indifferent about both, or he has made up his mind in his own way: he wants the minister to confirm him in his own views, and smooth over the wound. I have seen such men mad with rage, while I have been beating down their *refuges of lies*, and setting forth to them God's refuge. There is a wise and holy medium to be observed in treating such cases:—"I am not come to *daub you over with untempered mortar*: I am not come to send you to the bar of God with a *lie in your right-hand*. But neither am I come to mortify you, to put you to unnecessary pain, to imbitter you, or to exasperate you." There is a kindness, affection, tenderness, meekness, and patience, which a man's feelings and conscience will condemn him while he opposes! I have found it a very effectual method to begin with myself: it awakens attention, conciliates the mind, and insinuates conviction:—"Whatever others think of themselves, I stand condemned before God: my heart is so *desperately wicked*, that, if God had not showed me in his word a remedy in Jesus Christ, I should be in despair: I can only tell you what I am, and what I have found. If you believe yourselves to be what God has told me I am and all men are, then I can tell you where and how to find mercy and eternal life: if you will not believe that you are this sort of man, I have nothing to offer you. I know of nothing else for man beside that which God has showed me." My descriptions of my own fallen nature have excited perfect astonishment: sometimes my penitents have seemed scarcely able to credit me, but I have found that God has fastened, by this means, conviction on the conscience. In some cases, an indirect method of addressing the conscience may apparently be, in truth, the most direct; but we are to use this method wisely and sparingly. It seems to me to be one of the characteristics of the day, in the religious world, to err on this subject. We have found out a circuitous way of exhibiting truth. The plain, direct, simple exhibition of it, is often abandoned, even where no circumstances justify and require a more insinuating manner. There is dexterity, indeed, and address in this; but too little of the simple *declaration of the testimony of God*, which St. Paul opposes to *excellency of speech or of wisdom*, and to *enticing words of man's wisdom*. We have done very little when we have merely persuaded men to think as we do.

But we have to deal with a worse death-bed character, than with the man who opposes the truth. Some men assent to every thing which we propose. They will even anticipate us. And yet we see that they mean nothing. I have often felt, when with such persons: "J

would they could be brought to contradict and oppose! That would lead to discussion. God might, peradventure, dash the stony heart in pieces. But this heart is like water. The impression dies as fast as it is made." I have sought for such views as might rouse and stir up opposition. I have tried to irritate the torpid mind. But all in vain. I once visited a young clergyman of this character, who was seized with a dangerous illness at a coffee-house in town, whither some business had brought him: the first time I saw him, we conversed very closely together; and, in the prospect of death, he seemed solicitous to prepare for it. But I could make no sort of impression upon him: all I could possibly say met his entire approbation, though I saw his heart felt no interest in it. When I visited him a second time, the fear of death was gone: and, with it, all solicitude about religion. He was still civil and grateful, but he tried to parry off the business on which he knew I came. "I will show you, Sir, some little things with which I have worn away the hours of my confinement and solitude." He brought out a quantity of pretty and tasty drawings. I was at a loss how to express, with suitable force and delicacy, the high sense I felt of his indecorum and insipidity, and to leave a deep impression on his conscience.—I rose, however, instantly—said my time was expired—wished him well, and withdrew.

Sometimes we have a painful part to act with sincere men, who would have been carried too much into the world. I was called in to visit such a man. "I find no comfort," he said. "God veils his face from me. Every thing round me is dark and uncertain." I did not dare to act the flatterer. I said—"Let us look faithfully into the state of things. I should have been surprised if you had not felt thus. I believe you to be sincere. Your state of feelings evinces your sincerity. Had I found you exulting in God, I should have concluded that you were either deceived or a deceiver: for, while God acts in his usual order, how could you expect to feel otherwise on the approach of death, than you do feel? You have driven hard after the world. Your spirit has been absorbed in its cares. Your sentiment—your conversation have been in the spirit of the world. And have you any reason to expect the response of conscience and the clear evidence which await the man who has walked and lived in the close friendship with God! You know that what I say is true." His wife interrupted me, by assuring me that he had been an excellent man. "Silence!" said the dying penitent, "it is all true!"

Soon after I came to St. John's I was called on to visit a dying lady, whom I saw many times before her death. I found that she had taken God for her portion and rest. She approached him with the penitence of a sinner grateful for his provision of mercy in Christ. She told me she had found religion in her Common Prayer Book. She blessed God that she had "always been kept steady to her church; and that she had never followed the people

called Methodists, who were seducing so many on all sides." I thought it would be unadvisable to attempt the removal of prejudices, which, in her dying case, were harmless, and which would soon be removed by the light which would beam in on her glorified soul. We had more interesting subjects of conversation, from which this would have led us away. Some persons may tax her with a want of charity: but, alas! I fear they are persons, who, knowing more than she did of the doctrines of the gospel, have so little of its divine charity in their hearts, that, as they cannot allow for her prejudices, neither would they have been the last to stigmatize her as a dead formalist and a pharisee. God knoweth them that are his; and they are often seen by him, where we see them not. Were a benighted inhabitant of Otaheite to feel the wretchedness of his present life, and lift up his soul to the God he worshipped as a Supreme Being for happiness, no doubt God would hear such a prayer.

Miscellaneous Remarks on the Christian Ministry.

EVERY book really worth a minister's studying, he ought, if possible, to have in his own library. I have used large libraries, but I soon left them. Time was frittered away: my mind was unconcentrated. Besides, the habit which it begets of turning over a multitude of books is a pernicious habit. And the usual contents of such libraries are injurious to a spiritual man, whose business it is to transact with men's minds. They have a dry, cold, deadening effect. It may suit dead men to walk among the dead; but send not a living man to be chilled among the ruins of Tadmor in the wilderness!

CHRISTIANITY is so great and surprising in its nature, that, in preaching it to others, I have no encouragement but the belief of a continued divine operation. It is no difficult thing to change a man's opinions. It is no difficult thing to attach a man to my person and notions. It is no difficult thing to convert a proud man to spiritual pride, or a passionate man to passionate zeal for some religious party. But, to bring a man to love God—to love the law of God, while it condemns him—to loath himself before God—to tread the earth under his feet—to hunger and thirst after God in Christ, and after the mind that was in Christ—with man this is impossible! But God has said it shall be done: and bids me go forth and preach, that by me, as his instrument, he may effect these great ends; and therefore I go.—Yet I am obliged continually to call my mind back to my principles. I feel angry, perhaps, with a man, because he will not let me convert him: in spite of all I can say, he will still love the world.

ST. PAUL admonishes Timothy to *endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*. It sometimes falls to the lot of a minister to endure the hard labor of a nurse, in a greater

measure than that of a soldier. He has to encounter the difficulties of a peculiar situation: he is the parent of a family of children, of various tempers, manners, habits, and prejudices: if he does not continually mortify himself, he will bear hardly upon some of his children.—He has, however, to endure the hardness of calling his child, his friend, to an account; of being thought a severe, jealous, legal man. If a man will let matters take their chance, he may live smoothly and quietly enough; but if he will stir among the servants, and sift things to the bottom, he must bear the consequences. He must account himself *a Man of Strife*. His language must be—"It is not enough that you feed me, or fill my pocket—there is something between me and thee." The most tender and delicate of his flock have their failings. His warmest and most zealous supporters break down somewhere. A sun-shiny day breeds most reptiles. It is not enough, therefore, that the sun shines out in his church. It is not enough that numbers shout applause.

A minister may be placed in a discouraging situation. He may not suit the popular taste. He may not be able to fall into the fashionable style. He may not *play well on an instrument*. Though an effective man, and a man of energy, he may be under a cloud. The door may be shut against him. Yet it is a dangerous thing for such a man to force open the door. He should rather say—"I have a lesson to learn here. If I teach the people nothing, perhaps they may teach me." The work of winter is to be done, as well as the work of summer.

The hardness which I have to endure is this—Here are a number of families, which show me every kind of regard. But I see that they are not right. They somehow so combine the things which they hear with the things which they do, that I am afraid they will at last *lie down in sorrow*! Here is my difficulty. I must meet them with gentleness; but I must detect and uncover the evil. I shall want real kindness and common honesty, if I do not. *Ephraim hath gray hairs; yet he knoweth it not. Ephraim is a cake not turned*. But, if I tell him these things, he and I shall become two persons. He must, however, be so touched in private; for he will not be touched in the pulpit. He will say, "I am not the man."

A MINISTER must *keep under his body, and bring it into subjection*. A Newmarket groom will sweat himself thin, that he may be fit for his office: *Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible!*

—is come from college. He has a refined, accurate, sensible mind. Some of our friends wished to get him a station at Calcutta. They think him just adapted for that sphere. I differ widely in my view of the matter. A new man, with his college accuracy about him, is not the man for the dissipated and fashionable court at Calcutta. Such a congregation will bid nothing for his acuteness and reasoning.—He, who is to talk to them with any

effect, must have seen life and the world. He must be able to treat with them on their own ground. And he must be able to do it with the authority of a messenger from God, not with the arts and shifts of human eloquence and reasonings. Dr. Patten said admirably well, in a sermon which I heard him preach at Oxford: "Beware how you suffer the infidel to draw you upon metaphysical ground. If he get you there, he will have something to say. The evidences and the declarations of God's word are the weapons with which he must be combatted, and before which he must fall."

LONDON is very peculiar as a ministerial walk. Almost all a minister can do, is by the pulpit and the pen. His hearers are so occupied in the world, that if he visit them, every minute perhaps brings in some interruption.

It is a serious question—*Whether a minister ought to preach at all beyond his experience.*—He is to stand forth as a witness—but a witness of what he knows, not of what he has been told. He must preach as he feels. If he feels not as he might and ought, he must pray for such feelings; but, till he has them, ought he to pretend to them? Going faster than the experience led, has been the bane of many. Men have preached in certain terms and phrases according to the tone given by others, while the thing has never been made out even to their conviction, much less in their experience.

It is a most important point of duty in a minister to REDEEM TIME. A young minister has sometimes called an old one out of his study, only to ask him how he did: there is a tone to be observed toward such an idler: an intimation may be given, which he will understand, "This is not the house!" In order to redeem time, he must refuse to engage in secular affairs: *No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.* He must watch, too, against a dozing away of time: the clock-weight goes down slowly, yet it draws all the works with it.

OWEN remarks, that it is not sufficiently considered how much a minister's personal religion is exposed to danger, from the very circumstance of religion being his profession and employment. He must go through the acts of religion: he must put on the appearances of religion: he must utter the language and display the feelings of religion. It requires double diligence and vigilance to maintain, under such circumstances, the spirit of religion. I have prayed: I have talked: I have preached: but now I should perish, after all, if I did not feed on the bread which I have broken to others.

A MINISTER MUST CULTIVATE A TENDER SPIRIT. If he does this so as to carry a savor and unction into his work, he will have far more weight than other men. This is the result of a devotional habit. To affect feeling, is nauseous and

soon detected; but to feel, is the readiest way to the hearts of others.

THE leading defect in Christian ministers is want of a DEVOTIONAL HABIT. The church of Rome made much of this habit. The contests accompanying and following the Reformation, with something of an indiscriminate enmity against some of the good of that church as well as the evil, combined to repress this spirit in the Protestant writings; whereas the *mind of Christ* seems, in fact, to be the grand end of Christianity in its operation upon man.

THERE is a manifest want of spiritual influence on the ministry of the present day. I feel it in my own case, and I see it in that of others. I am afraid that there is too much of a low, managing, contriving, manœuvring temper of mind among us. We are laying ourselves out, more than is expedient, to meet one man's taste, and another man's prejudices. The ministry is a grand and holy affair, and it should find in us a simple habit of spirit, and a holy but humble indifference to all consequences.

A MAN of the world will bear to hear me read in the desk that awful passage: *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.* Nay, he will approve it:—"The minister is in the desk: he is reading the lesson of the day." But this very man—were I to go home with him, and tell him in his parlor that most of those whom he knows and loves are going on in that road to eternal destruction—this very man would brand the sentiment as harsh and uncharitable. Though uttered by Christ himself, it is a declaration as fanatical and uncandid, in the judgment of the world, as could be put together in language.

MANY hearers cannot enter into the REASONS of the Cross. They adopt what I think is Butler's grand defect on this subject. He speaks of the Cross as an appointment of God, and THEREFORE to be submitted to: but God has said much in his word of the reasons of this appointment: *that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth.*

SEVERAL things are required, to enable a minister to attain a proper variety in his manner. He must be in continual practice: if I were to preach but once a month, I should lose the ability of preaching. He must know that his hearers are attached to him—that they will grant him indulgences and liberties. He must, in some measure, feel himself above his congregation. The presence of a certain brother chills me; because I feel that I can talk on no one subject in the pulpit, with which he is not far better acquainted than I am.

THE first duty of a minister is, to call on his hearers to *turn to the Lord*. "We have

much to speak to you upon. We have many duties to urge on you. We have much instruction to give you—but all will be thrown away, till you have *turned to the Lord*." Let me illustrate this by a familiar comparison. You see your child sinking in the water: his education lies near your heart: you are anxious to train him up so, that he may occupy well the post assigned to him in life. But, when you see him drowning, the first thoughts are—not how you may educate him, but how you may save him. Restore him to life, and then call that life into action.

A DISINTERESTED regard to truth should be, what it very seldom is, the most striking character in a Christian minister. His purpose should be to make proselytes to truth, and not to any thing which may be particular in his views of it. "Read my books," says one.—"No!" says another, "read mine." And thus religion is taken up by piece-meal; and the mind is diverted from its true nature by false associations. If the teacher, whom this man has chosen for his oracle, disgrace religion by irreligious conduct, he stumbles. He stumbles, because he has not been fixed upon the sole and immovable basis of the religion of the Bible. The mind, well instructed in the Scriptures, can bear to see even its spiritual father make shipwreck of the faith and scandalize the gospel; but will remain itself unmoved. The man is in possession of a treasure, which, if others are foolish enough to abandon, yet they cannot detract any thing from the value attached to it in his esteem.

THAT a minister may learn how to *magnify his office*, let him study the character, the spirit, and the history of St. Paul. His life and death were one magnifying of his office: mark his object—to win souls!—to execute the will of God! As the man rises in his own esteem, his office sinks; but, as the office rises in his view, the man falls. He must be in constant hostility with himself, if he would magnify his office. He must hold himself in readiness to make sacrifices, when called to do so: he will not barter his office, like Balaam; but will refuse to sell his service, like Micaiah. Like Ezra and Nehemiah, he will refuse to come down from the great work which he has to do. He may be calumniated; but he will avoid hasty vindications of his character: it does not appear that Elisha sent after Naaman to vindicate himself from the falsehoods of Gehazi: there appears to me much true dignity in this conduct: I fear I should have wanted patience to act thus.

SOME young ministers have been greatly injured, by taking up their creed from a sort of second or third rate writers. Toplady, perhaps, has said that he has found his preaching most successful, when it has turned on the grand doctrines of Calvinism. A young man admires Toplady, and adopts the same notion concerning his own ministry. But let him turn to a master on the subject. He will find

such a man as Traill handling the sovereignty of God, and such high points of doctrine, with a holy and heavenly sweetness; which, while it renders it almost impossible not to receive his sentiments, leaves nothing on the mind but a religious savor.

THE grand aim of a minister must be THE EXHIBITION OF GOSPEL TRUTH. Statesmen may make the greatest blunders in the world, but that is not his affair. Like a King's messenger, he must not stop to take care of a person fallen down: if he can render any kindness consistently with his duty, he will do it; if not, he will prefer his office.

Our method of preaching is not that by which Christianity was propagated: yet the genius of Christianity is not changed. There was nothing in the primitive method set or formal. The primitive bishop stood up, and read the gospel, or some other portion of Scripture, and pressed on the hearers, with great earnestness and affection, a few plain and forcible truths evidently resulting from that portion of the Divine Word: we take a text, and make an oration. Edification was then the object of both speaker and hearers; and, while this continues to be the object, no better method can be found. A parable, or history, or passage of Scripture, thus illustrated and enforced, is the best method of introducing truth to any people who are ignorant of it, and of setting it home with power on those who know it; and not formal, doctrinal, argumentative discourses. TRUTH and SIMPLICITY are the soul of an efficacious ministry.

The Puritans were still farther removed from the primitive method of preaching; they would preach fifteen or sixteen sermons on a text. A primitive bishop would have been shocked with one of our sermons; and, such is our taste, we should be shocked with his. They brought forward Scripture: we bring forward our statements. They directed all their observations to throw light on Scripture: we quote Scripture to throw light on our observations. More faith and more grace would make us better preachers, for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*. Chrysostom's was the right method. Leighton's Lectures on Peter approach very near to this method.

IN acting on matter, the art of man is mighty. The steam-engine is a mighty machine. But, in religion, the art of man is mere feebleness. The armor of Saul is armor in the camp of the Israelites, or in the camp of the Philistines—but we want the sling and the stone. I honor Metaphysicians, Logicians, Critics, and Historians—in their places. Look at facts. Men, who lay out their strength in statements, preach churches empty. Few men have a wisdom so large, as to see that the way which they cannot attain may yet be the best way. I dare not tell most academical, logical, frigid men, how little I account of their opinion, concerning the true method of preaching to the popular ear. I hear them talk, as

utterly incompetent judges. Such men would have said St. Paul was fit only for the tabernacle. What he would have said they were fit for, I cannot tell. They are often great men—first-rate men—unequalled men—in their class and sphere: but it is not *their* sphere to manage the world.

If a minister could work miracles, he would do little more than interest the curiosity of men—"I want to eat, and I want to drink, and I do it; I get on with difficulty enough, as things are; and you talk about treating with heaven! I know nothing of the matter, and I want no such thing"—This is the language of man's heart. A *FUTURE* thing! An *INDEFINITELY FUTURE* thing! No! if a man could even authoritatively declare that the day of judgment would be this day seven years, he would have little influence on mankind. Very few would be driven from the play-house—very few from the gaming table—very few from the brothel.—The din on 'Change would be very little diminished. I frequently look back on the early periods of my life, and imagine myself treating with such a character as I know I then was. I say to myself, "What now can I possibly say, that will affect and interest that young fellow of eighteen?"

SOME Christian ministers fail in their effect on their hearers, by not entering as philosophers into the state of human nature. They do not consider how low the patient is reduced—that he is to be treated more as a child—that he is to have *milk* administered to him, instead of *strong meat*. They set themselves to plant principles and prove points, when they should labor to interest the heart. But, after all, men will carry their natural character into their ministry. If a man has a dry, logical, scholastic turn of mind, we shall rarely find him an interesting preacher. One in a thousand may meet him, but not more.

THE Christian will sometimes be brought to walk in a solitary path. God seems to cut away his props, that he may reduce him to himself. His religion is to be felt as a personal, particular, appropriate possession. He is to feel, that, as there is but one Jehovah to bless, so there seems to him as though there were but one penitent in the universe to be blessed by Him. Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre was brought to this state. She might have said, "I know not where Peter is: he is gone away—perhaps into the world—perhaps to weep over his fall. I know not where John is. What are the feelings and states of my brethren, I know not. I am left here alone. No one accompanies and strengthens me. But if none other will seek my Lord, yet will I seek him!" There is a commanding energy in religious sympathy. A minister, for example, while his preaching seems effective, and life and feeling show themselves around him, moves on with ease and pleasure. But there is much of the man here. If God change the scene—if discouragements meet him—if he

seem to be laid by, in any measure, as an instrument—if the love of his hearers to his person and ministry decay—this is a severe trial: yet most of us need this trial, that we may be reduced simply to God, and may feel that the whole affair is between him and ourselves. A dead fish will swim with the stream, whatever be its direction. But a living one will not only resist the stream: but, if it chooses, it can swim against it. The soul that lives from God, will seek God, and follow God—more easily and pleasantly, indeed, if the stream flow toward the point whither God leads; but still, it will follow God as its sole rest and centre, though the stream of men and opinions would hurry it away from him.

GRAVITY is, doubtless, obligatory on ministers. The apostle connects it with simplicity. Yet it must be natural—not affected. Some men give every thing in an oracular style: this looks like affectation, and will disgust others: they will attribute it to religion: but this is not a sanctified gravity. Other men are always disposed to levity: not that a man of original fancy is to be condemned for thinking in his own way: but the minister must consider that he is a man of a consecrated character: if it should not be difficult to himself to make transitions from levity to gravity, it will be difficult to carry others with him therein. Who has not felt, if God brings him into a trying situation, in which he sees that it is an awful thing to suffer or to die, that gravity is then natural? every thing else is offensive! That, too, is evil which lets down the tone of a company: when a minister loses his gravity, the company will take liberties with him. Yet, with a right principle, we must not play the fool. Gravity must be natural and simple. There must be urbanity and tenderness in it. A man must not formalize on every thing. He, who formalizes on every thing, is a fool: and a grave fool is perhaps more injurious than a light fool.

WE are called to build a spiritual house. One workman is not to busy himself in telling another his duty. We are placed in different circumstances, with various talents: and each is called to do what he can. Two men, equally accepted of God, may be exceedingly distinct in the account which they will give of their employ.

A REGULAR clergyman can do no more in the discharge of his duty, than our church requires of him. He may fall far short of her requirements: but he cannot exceed, by the most devoted life, the duties which he is prescribed. What man on earth is so pernicious a drone, as an idle clergyman!—a man, engaged in the most serious profession in the world: who rises to eat, and drink, and lounge, and trifle: and goes to bed; and then rises again, to do the same! Our office is the most laborious in the world. The mind must be always on the stretch, to acquire wisdom and grace, and to communicate them to all who come near. It is well, indeed, when a clergyman of genius

and learning devotes himself to the publication of classics and works of literature, if he cannot be prevailed on to turn his genius and learning to a more important end. Enter into this kind of society, what do you hear!—"Have you seen the new edition of Sophocles?"—"No! is a new edition of Sophocles undertaken?"—and this makes up the conversation, and these are the ends of men who, by profession, should win souls! I received a most useful hint from Dr. Bacon, then Father of the University, when I was at College. I used frequently to visit him at his Living near Oxford: he would say to me, "What are you doing? What are your studies?"—"I am reading so and so."—"You are quite wrong. When I was young, I could turn any piece of Hebrew into Greek verse with ease. But, when I came into this parish, and had to teach ignorant people, I was wholly at a loss; I had no furniture. They thought me a great man, but that was their ignorance; for I knew as little as they did of what it was most important to them to know. Study chiefly what you can turn to good account in your future life." And yet this wise man had not just views of serious religion: he was one of those who are for reforming the parish—making the maids industrious, and the men sober and honest—but when I ventured to ask, "Sir, must not all this be effected by the infusion of a divine principle into the mind? a union of the soul with the great head of influence?"—"No more of that; no more of that, I pray!"

A wise minister stands between practical atheism and religious enthusiasm.

A SERMON, that has more *head* infused into it than *heart*, will not come home with efficacy to the hearers. "You must do so and so: such and such consequences will follow if you do not: such and such advantages will result from doing it:"—this is cold, dead, and spiritless, when it stands alone; or even when it is most prominent. Let the preacher's head be stored with wisdom; but, above all, let his heart so feel his subject, that he may infuse life and interest into it, by speaking like one who actually possesses and feels what he says.

FAITH is the master-spring of a minister. "Hell is before me, and thousands of souls shut up there in everlasting agonies—Jesus Christ stands forth 'o save men from rushing into this bottomless abyss—He sends me to proclaim his ability and his love: I want no fourth idea!—every fourth idea is contemptible!—every fourth idea is a grand impertinence!"

THE meanness of the earthen vessel, which conveys to others the Gospel treasure, takes nothing from the value of the treasure. A dying hand may sign a deed of gift of incalculable value. A shepherd's boy may point out the way to a philosopher. A beggar may be the bearer of an invaluable present.

A WRITER of sermons has often no idea how many words he uses, to which the common people affix either no meaning, or a false one. He speaks, perhaps, of "relation to God;" but the people, who hear him, affix no other idea to the word, than that of father, or brother, or relative. The preacher must converse with the people, that he may acquire their words and phrases.

It sometimes pleases God to disqualify ministers for their work, before he takes them to their reward. Where he gives them wisdom to perceive this, and grace to acquiesce in the dispensation—such a close of an honorable life, where the desire to be publicly useful survives the power, is a loud AMEN to all former labors.

On Infidelity and Popery.

INFIDEL writings are ultimately productive of little or no danger to the church of God. Nay, we are less at a loss in judging of the wisdom of Providence in permitting them, than we are in judging of many other of its designs. They may shake the simple, humble, spiritual mind; but they are, in the end, the means of enlightening and settling it.

There are but two sorts of people in the world. Some walk *by the light of the Lord*, and all others lie *in the wicked one in darkness and in the shadow of death*. Where there is not an enlightened, simple, humble, spiritual mind, notions and opinions are of little consequence. The impudent and refuted misrepresentations of infidels may turn a dark mind to some other notions and way of thinking; but it is in the dark still. Till a man sees *by the light of the Lord*, every change of opinions is only putting a new dress on a dead carcass, and calling it alive.

The grace of God must give simplicity. Wherever that is, it is a security against dangerous error; wherever it is not, erroneous opinions may perhaps less predispose the mind against the truth of God in its lively power on the soul, than true notions destitute of all life and influence do.

Yet the writings of infidels must be read with caution and fear. There are cold, intellectual, speculative, malignant foes to Christianity. I dare not tamper with such, when I am in my right mind. I have received serious injury, for a time, even when my duty has called me to read what they have to say. The daring impiety of Belsham's answer to Wilberforce ruffled the calm of my spirits. I read it over while at Bath, in the autumn of 1798. I waked in pain, about two o'clock in the morning. I tried to cheer myself by an exercise of faith on Jesus Christ. I lifted up my heart to him, as sympathizing with me and engaged to support me. Many times have I thus obtained quiet and repose: but now I could lay no hold on him: I had given the enemy an advantage over me: my habit had imbibed poison: my nerves trembled! my strength was gone!—"Jesus Christ sympathize with you,

and relieve you! It is all enthusiasm! It is idolatry! Jesus Christ has preached his sermons, and done his duty, and is gone to heaven! And there he is, as other good men are! Address your prayers to the Supreme Being!"—I obtain relief, in such cases, by dismissing from my thoughts all that enemies or friends can say. I will have nothing to do with Belsham or with Wilberforce. I come to Christ himself. I hear what he says. I turn over the gospels. I read his conversations. I dwell especially on his farewell discourse with his disciples in St. John's gospel. If there be meaning in words, and if Christ were not a deceiver or deceived, the reality of the Christian's life, in him and from him by faith, is written there as with a sun-beam.

This temptation besets me to this day, and I know not that I have any other which is so particular in its attacks upon me. I am sometimes restless in bed: and, when I find myself so, I generally think that the parenthesis cannot be so well employed as in prayer. While my mind is thus ascending to Christ and communing with him, it often comes across me—"What a fool art thou, to imagine these mental effusions can be known to any other Being! what a senseless enthusiast, to imagine that the man who was nailed to a cross can have any knowledge of these secrets of thy soul!" On one of these occasions it struck me with great and commanding evidence—"Why might not St. John, in the Isle of Patmos—imprisoned perhaps in a cave—why might not he have said so? Why might not he have doubted whether Christ the crucified could have knowledge of his feeling, when he *was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*? He had no doubt communion with Christ in the Spirit, before he had those palpable evidences of his presence which immediately followed."

In the permission of certain bold infidel characters and writings, we may discern plain evidences of that awful system of judicial government, with which God has been pleased to rule the world. Where there is a moral indisposition, where men are inclined to be deceived, where they are waiting as it were for a leader—there he sends such men or such writings, as harden them in their impiety: while a teachable and humble mind will discern the true character of such men or writings, and escape the danger.

I can conceive a character much more pernicious in its influence, than the daring and impudent infidel. A man—in the estimation of all the world modest, amiable, benevolent—who should, with deep concern, lament the obligation under which he feels himself to depart from the religion of Europe, the religion of his country, the religion of his family; and should profess his unfeigned desire to find this religion true, but that he cannot possibly bring his mind to believe it, and that for such and such reasons: when he should thus introduce all the strongest points that can be urged on the subject.

But God governs the world. It is not in his

design to permit such men to arise. The infidel has always had something about him, which has ascertained his obliquity to the eye, that has not been dimmed by the moral indisposition of the heart.

THE low and scurrilous writers against Revelation carry their own condemnation with them. They are like an ill-looking fellow, who comes into a Court of Justice to give evidence; but carries the aspect, on the first glance, of a town bully, ready to swear whatever shall be suggested to him.

BURKE has painted the spirit of democracy to the life. I have fallen in with some democrats, who knew nothing of me. They have been subjects of great curiosity, when I could forget the horrid display of sin that was before me. I saw a malignant eye—a ferocity—an intensity of mind on their point. Viewed in its temper and tendencies, Jacobinism is Devilism—Belialism. It takes the yoke of God and man—puts it on the ground—and stamps on it. Every man is called out into exertion against it. It is an inveterate, malignant, blaspheming, atheistical, fierce spirit. It seems a toss up with these men, whether Satan himself shall govern the world. Before such men, I say not a word. Our Master has commanded us *not to cast pearls before swine*. I am vastly delighted with character—true and original character: but this is an awful and affecting display of it.

THE church has endured a PAGAN and a PAPAL persecution. There remains for her an INFIDEL persecution—general, bitter, purifying, cementing.

It is, perhaps, impossible, in the very nature of things, that such another scheme as Popery could be invented. It is, in truth, *the mystery of iniquity*, that it should be able to work itself into the simple, grand, sublime, holy institution of Christianity, and so to interweave its abominations with the truth, as to occupy the strongest passions of the soul, and to control the strongest understandings! While Pascal can speak of Popery as he does, its influence over the mass of the people can excite no surprise. Those two master principles—That we must believe as the church ordains—and, That there is no salvation out of this church—oppose, in the ignorance and fear which they beget, an almost insuperable barrier against the truth.

I HAVE not such expectations of a millennium as many entertain: yet I believe that the figures and expressions of prophecy have never received their accomplishment. They are too grand and ample, to have been fulfilled by any state which the church has hitherto seen. Christianity has yet had no face suitable to its dignity. It has savored hitherto too much of man—of his institutions—of his prejudices—of his follies—of his sin. It must be drawn out—depicted—exhibited—demonstrated to

the world. Its chief enemies have been the men by whom, under the professions of *Hail, Master!* it has been distorted, abused, and vilified.

Popery was the master-piece of Satan. I believe him utterly incapable of such another contrivance. It was a systematic and infallible plan for forming manacles and mufflers for the human mind. It was a well laid design to render Christianity contemptible, by the abuse of its principles and its institutions. It was formed to overwhelm—to enchant—to sit as *the great whore, making the earth drunk with her fornications.*

The infidel conspiracy approaches nearest to Popery. But infidelity is a suicide. It dies by its own malignity. It is known and read of all men. No man was ever injured essentially by it, who was fortified with a small portion of the genuine spirit of Christianity—its contrition and its docility. Nor is it one in its efforts: its end is one; but its means are disjointed, various, and often clashing. Popery debases and alloys Christianity; but infidelity is a furnace, wherein it is purified and refined. The injuries done to it by Popery will be repaired by the very attacks of infidelity.

In the mean time, Christianity wears an enchanting form to all, who can penetrate through the mists thrown around it by its false friends and its avowed foes. The exiled French Priest raises the pity and indignation of all Christians, while he describes the infernal plots of the infidel conspirators against Christianity, and shows them in successful operation against his church.* We seem, for a while, to forget her errors: and we view her, for the moment, only so far as she possesses Christianity in common with ourselves. But when he charges the origin of this infidel conspiracy on the principles asserted by the Waldenses or the church of Geneva, the enchantment dissolves. We see that he is under the influence of a sophism: by which, having imposed upon himself, he would impose upon others. With him, Christianity and his church mean one and the same thing. A separation from his church, is a separation from Christianity; and proceeds on principles which lead necessarily, if pursued to their issues, to every abomination of infidelity. But let him know that the church of Geneva protested against the false friend of Christianity; and that, if the avowed enemy of Christianity had then elevated himself, she would have protested with equal zeal against him. Let him know, that, if his church had listened to the voice of the Reformer, the enemy of Christianity would have wanted ground for footing to his attacks. The Papist falsely charges the Reformer as the father of infidelity: the infidel maliciously confounds Popery and Christianity: but the true Christian is as far from the licentiousness of the infidel, as he is from the corruption of the Papist.

I am not inclined to view things in a gloomy aspect. Christianity must undergo a renova-

tion. If God has sent his Son, and has declared that he will exalt him on his throne—the earth and all that it inherits are contemptible in the view of such a plan! If this be God's design—proceed it does, and proceed it will. Christianity is such a holy and spiritual affair, that perhaps all human institutions are to be destroyed to make way for it. Men may fashion things as they will; but, if there is no effusion of the Spirit of God on their institutions, they will remain barren and lifeless. Many Christians appear to have forgotten this.

On a Christian's Duty in these eventful times.

Ours is a period of no common kind. The path of duty to a Christian is now unusually difficult. It seems to me, however, to be comprehended in two words—**Be quiet and useful.** The precept is short; but the application of it requires much grace and wisdom. Take not a single step out of a quiet obscurity, to which you are not compelled by a sense of utility.

Two parties have divided the world.

The JACOBINS are desperadoes:—the earth's torment and plague. Bishop Horsley said well of them lately from the pulpit—"These are they who have poisoned Watts's Hymns for children. These are they who are making efforts to contaminate every means of access to the public mind. And what is their aim?—What are their pretensions?—That they will have neither Lord nor King over them. But, verily, one is their King;—whose name, in the Hebrew tongue, is *Abaddon*; but, in the Greek tongue, he is called *Apollyon*; and in plain English—'The Devil.' My soul, come not thou near the tents of these wicked men!"

"But the ANTI-JACOBINS?" Their project, as a body, leaves God out of the question. Their proposal is unholy. I cannot be insensible to the security, order, and liberty, with which these kingdoms are favored above all other nations; but I cannot go forth with these men, as one of their party. I cannot throw up my hat, and shout "Huzza!" Wo to the world, if even THEY prevail!

The world is a lying, empty pageant; and these men are ensnared with the show. My part in it, as a Christian, is to act with simplicity as the servant of God. What does God bid me do? What, in this minute of time, which will be gone and carry me with it into eternity—what is my path of duty? While enemies blaspheme, and friends are beguiled, let me *stand on my watch-tower* with the Prophet, *listening what the Lord God shall say to me.* In any scheme of man, I dare not be drunken. *We, who are of the day, must be sober.* Churchman or dissenter, if I am a true Christian, I shall talk thus to my connexions. The sentiment of the multitude is ensnaring: but the multitude is generally wrong. I must beware of the contagion. Not that I am to push myself into consequence. The matter is between me and my God—Not one step out of a holy quiet and obscurity, but in order to utility.

* Alluding to Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism. J. P.

Yet we must be active and bold, whenever duty calls us to be so. My own conduct, with respect to the religious world, is too much formed on my feelings. I see it in what I deem a lamentable state; but I seem to say, "Well! go on talking, and mistaking, and making a noise: only make not a noise here:" and then I retire into my closet, and shrink within myself. But had I more faith, and simplicity, and love, and self-denial, I might do all I do in my present sphere, but I should throw myself in the midst of them, and entreat and argue and remonstrate.

But then such a man must give himself up as a sacrifice. He would be misrepresented and calumniated from many quarters. But he would make up his account for such treatment. How would St. Paul have acted in such a state of the church? Would he not have displayed that warm spirit, which made him say, *O foolish Galatians! who hath bewitched you?* and that holy self-denial, which dictated, *I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more exceedingly I love you, the less I be loved?*

It is not to be calculated how much a single man may effect, who throws his whole powers into a thing. Who, for instance, can estimate the influence of VOLTAIRE! He shed an influence of a peculiar sort over Europe. His powers were those of a gay buffoon—far different from those of HUME, and others of his class—but he threw himself wholly into them. It is true these men meet the wickedness or the imbecility of the human mind; but there are many right hearted people, who hang a long time on the side of pure, silent, simple religion. Let a man, who sees things as I do, throw himself out with all his powers, to rescue and guide such persons.

On Fortifying Youth against Infidel Principles.

I NEVER gathered from infidel writers, when an avowed infidel myself, any solid difficulties, which were not brought to my mind by a very young child of my own. "Why was sin permitted?"—"What an insignificant world is this, to be redeemed by the incarnation and death of the Son of God!"—"Who can believe that so few will be saved?"—Objections of this kind, in the mind of reasoning young persons, prove to me that they are the growth of fallen nature.

The nurse of infidelity is sensuality. Youth are sensual. The Bible stands in their way. It prohibits the indulgence of *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*. But the young mind loves these things; and, therefore, it hates the Bible which prohibits them. It is prepared to say, "If any man will bring me arguments against the Bible, I will thank him: if not, I will invent them."

As to infidel arguments, there is no weight in them. They are jejune and refuted. Infidels are not themselves convinced by them.

In combating this evil in youth, we must recollect the proverb, that "a man may bring his horse to the water, but cannot make him drink."

The minds of the young are pre-occupied. They will not listen. Yet a crisis may come. They will stop and bethink themselves.

One promising method with them, is, TO APPEAL TO FACTS. What sort of men are infidels? They are loose, fierce, overbearing men. There is nothing in them like sober and serious inquiry. They are the wildest fanatics on earth. Nor have they agreed among themselves on any scheme of truth and felicity. Contrast with the character of infidels that of real Christians.

It is advantageous to dwell with youth on the NEED AND NECESSITIES OF MAN. "Every pang and grief tells a man that he needs a helper: but infidelity provides none. And what can its schemes do for you in death?"

Impress them with a SENSE OF THEIR IGNORANCE. I silence myself, many times a day, by a sense of my own ignorance.

APPEAL TO THEIR CONSCIENCES. "Why is it that you listen to infidelity? Is not infidelity a low, carnal, wicked game? Is it not the very picture of the Prodigal—*Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me?*"—The question why infidelity is received, exposes it, and shows it to the light. WHY—WHY will a man be an infidel? Your children may urge difficulties: but tell them that inexplicable difficulties surround you: you are compelled to believe, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, whether you will or no; and shall you not be a believer in the hundredth instance from choice?

DRAW OUT A MAP OF THE ROAD OF INFIDELITY. It will lead them to such stages, at length, as they never could suspect. *Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?*

THE SPIRIT AND TONE OF YOUR HOUSE will have great influence on your children. If it is what it ought to be, it will often fasten conviction on their minds, however wicked they may become. I have felt the truth of this in my own case: I said, "My father is right, and I am wrong! Oh, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" The by-conversations in a family are, in this view, of unspeakable importance.

On the whole, arguments addressed to the heart press more forcibly than those addressed to the head. When I was a child, and a very wicked one too, one of Dr. Watts's Hymns sent me to weep in a corner. The lives in Janeway's Token had the same effect. I felt the influence of faith in suffering Christians. The character of young Samuel came home to me, when nothing else had any hold on my mind.

On the Management of Children.

GREAT wisdom is requisite in correcting the evils of children. A child is bashful, perhaps: but, in stimulating this child, we are too apt to forget future consequences. "Hold up your head. Don't be vulgar." At length they hold up their heads, and acquire such airs, that, too late, we discover our error. We forgot that we were giving gold, to purchase dross. We forgot that we were sacrificing modesty and

humility, to make them young actors and old tyrants.*

CHRISTIANS are imbibing so much of the cast and temper of the age, that they seem to be anxiously tutoring their children, and preparing them by all manner of means, not for a better world, but for the present. Yet in nothing should the simplicity of faith be more unreservedly exercised, than with regard to children. Their appointments and stations, yea, even their present and eternal happiness or misery, so far as they are influenced by their states and conditions in life, may be decided by the most minute and trivial events, all of which are in God's hand, and not in ours. An unbelieving spirit pervades, in this respect, too intimately the Christian world.

WHEN I meet children to instruct them, I do not suffer one grown person to be present. The Moravians pursue a different method. Some of their elder brethren even sit among the children, to sanction and encourage the work. This is well, provided children are to be addressed in the usual manner. But that will effect little good. Nothing is easier than to talk to children; but, to talk to them as they ought to be talked to, is the very last effort of ability. A man must have a vigorous imagination. He must have extensive knowledge, to call in illustrations from the four corners of the earth; for he will make little progress, but by illustration. It requires great genius, to throw the mind into the habit of children's minds. I aim at this, but I find it the utmost effort of ability. No sermon ever put my mind half so much on the stretch. The effort

* The reader cannot but admire the sentiments which Bishop Hurd has, on this subject, put into the mouth of Mr. Locke, one of his supposed interlocutors in the *Dialogue on Foreign Travels*.

"Bashfulness is not so much the effect of an ill education, as the proper gift and provision of wise nature. Every stage of life has its own set of manners, that is suited to it, and best becomes it. Each is beautiful in its season; and you might as well quarrel with the child's rattle, and advance him directly to the boy's top and span-farthing, as expect from diffident youth the manly confidence of riper age.

"Lamentable in the mean time, I am sensible, is the condition of my good lady; who, especially if she be a mighty well bred one, is perfectly shocked at the boy's awkwardness, and calls out on the tailor, the dancing-master, the player, the travelled tutor, any body and every body, to relieve her from the pain of so disgraceful an object.

"She should, however, be told, if a proper season and words soft enough could be found to convey the information, that the odious thing which disturbs her so much, is one of nature's signatures impressed on that age; that bashfulness is but the passage from one season of life to another; and that as the body is then the least graceful, when the limbs are making their last efforts and hastening to their just proportion, so the manners are least easy and disengaged, when the mind, conscious and impatient of its perfections, is stretching all its faculties to their full growth."

See Bishop Hurd's *Moral and Political Dialogues*, Ed. 6th.

London, 1788, vol. 3. pp. 99, 100, 101. J. P.

is such, that, were one person present, who was capable of weighing the propriety of what I said, it would be impossible for me to proceed: the mind must, in such a case, be perfectly at its ease: it must not have to exert itself under cramps and fetters. I am surprised at nothing which Dr. Watts did, but his Hymns for Children. Other men could have written as well as he, in his other works: but how he wrote these hymns, I know not. Stories fix children's attention. The moment I begin to talk in any thing like an abstract manner, the attention subsides. The simplest manner in the world will not make way to children's minds for abstract truths. With stories I find I could rivet their attention for two or three hours.

CHILDREN are very early capable of impression. I imprinted on my daughter the idea of faith, at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed to delight her wonderfully. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said—"My dear, you have some pretty beads there."—"Yes, Papa!"—"And you seem to be vastly pleased with them."—"Yes, Papa!"—"Well now, throw 'em behind the fire." The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at me, as though she ought to have a reason for such a cruel sacrifice. "Well, my dear, do as you please: but you know I never told you to do any thing, which I did not think would be good for you." She looked at me a few moments longer, and then—summoning up all her fortitude—her breast heaving with the effort—she dashed them into the fire."—"Well," said I; "there let them lie, you shall hear more about them another time; but say no more about them now." Some days after, I bought her a box full of larger beads, and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure and set it before her: she burst into tears with ecstasy. "Those, my child," said I, "are yours: because you believed me, when I told you it would be better for you to throw those two or three paltry beads behind the fire. Now that has brought you this treasure. But now, my dear, remember, as long as you live, what FAITH is. I did all this to teach you the meaning of FAITH. You threw your beads away when I bade you, because you had faith in me, that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same confidence in God. Believe every thing that he says in his word. Whether you understand it or not, have faith in him that he means your good."

On Family Worship.

FAMILY religion is of unspeakable importance. Its effect will greatly depend on the sincerity of the head of the family, and on his mode of conducting the worship of his household. If his children and servants do not see his prayers exemplified in his tempers and manners, they will be disgusted with religion. Tediumness will weary them. Fine language will shoot about them. Formality of connex-

ion or composition in prayer they will not comprehend. Gloominess or austerity of devotion will make them dread religion as a hard service. Let them be met with smiles. Let them be met as for the most delightful service in which they can be engaged. Let them find it short, savory, simple, plain, tender, heavenly. Worship, thus conducted, may be used as an engine of vast power in a family. It diffuses a sympathy through the members. It calls off the mind from the deadening effect of worldly affairs. It arrests every member, with a morning and evening sermon, in the midst of all the hurries and cares of life. It says, "There is a God!"—"There is a spiritual world!"—"There is a life to come!" It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind. It furnishes a tender and judicious father or master with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where a direct admonition might be inexpedient. It enables him to relieve the weight with which subordination or service often sits on the minds of inferiors.

In my family worship, I am not the reader, but employ one of my children. I make no formal comment on the Scripture: but, when any striking event or sentiment arises, I say, "Mark that!"—"See how God judges of that thing!" Sometimes I ask what they think of the matter, and how such a thing strikes them. I generally receive very strange, and sometimes ridiculous answers: but I am pleased with them: attention is all alive, while I am explaining wherein they err, and what is the truth. In this manner I endeavor to impress the spirit and scope of the passage on the family.

I particularly aim at the eradication of a false principle, wonderfully interwoven with the minds of children and servants; they take their standard from the neighborhood and their acquaintance, and by this they judge of every thing. I endeavor to raise them to a persuasion that God's will in Scripture is the standard; and that this standard is perpetually in opposition to that corrupt one around and before them.

The younger children of the family will soon have discernment enough to perceive that the Bible has a holiness about it, that runs directly contrary to the stream of opinion. And then, because this character is so evident, and so inseparable from the Scripture, the heart will distaste and reject it. Yet the standard must be preserved. If a man should lower it, they would soon detect him; and he must, after all, raise them up to the right standard again. Much may be effected by manner, as to impressing truth; but still, truth will remain irksome, till God touch the heart.

I read the Scriptures to my family in some regular order: and am pleased to have thus a lesson found for me. I look on the chapter of the day as a lesson sent for that day; and so I regard it as coming from God for the use of that day, and not of my own seeking.

I find it easy to keep up the attention of a congregation, in comparison of that of my

family. I have found the attention best gained by bringing the truths of Scripture into comparison with the facts which are before our eyes. It puts more *stimuli* into family expositions. I never found a fact lost, or the current news of the day fail of arresting the attention. "How does the Bible account for that fact?"—That man murdered his father—This or that thing happened in our house to-day—What does the Scripture say of such things?"

It is difficult to fix and quiet your family. The servants are eager to be gone, to do something in hand. There has been some disagreement, perhaps, between them and their mistress. We must seize opportunities. We must not drive hard at such times as these. Regularity, however, must be enforced. If a certain hour is not fixed and adhered to, the family will inevitably be found in confusion.

Religion should be prudently brought before a family. The old Dissenters wearied their families. Jacob reasoned well with Esau, about the tenderness of his children, and his flocks and herds. Something gentle, quiet, moderate, should be our aim. There should be no scolding: it should be mild and pleasant.

I avoid absolute uniformity: the mind revolts at it: though I would shun eccentricity, for that is still worse. At one time I would say something on what is read: but, at another time, nothing. I make it as NATURAL as possible: "I am a religious man: you are my children and my servants: it is NATURAL that we should do so and so."

Nothing of superstition should attach to family duty. It is not absolutely and in all cases indispensable. If unavoidably interrupted, we omit it: it is well. If I were peremptorily ordered, as the Jews were, to bring a lamb, I must be absolute. But this service is my liberty, not my task. I do not, however, mean in any degree to relax the proper obligation.

Children and servants should see us acting on the Psalmist's declaration, *I will speak of thy testimony before Kings*. If a great man happen to be present, let them see that I deem him nothing before the word of God!

On the Influence of the Parental Character.

THE influence of the parental character on children is not to be calculated. Every thing around has an influence on us. Indeed, the influence of things is so great, that, by familiarity with them, they insensibly urge us on principles and feelings which we before abhorred. I knew a man who took in a democratical paper, only to laugh at it. But at length, he had read the same things again and again, so often, that he began to think there must be some truth in them, and that men and measures were really such as they were so often said to be. A drop of water seems to have no influence on the stone; but it will, in the end, wear its way through. If there be, therefore, such a mighty influence in every

thing around us, the parental influence must be great indeed.

Consistency is the great character, in good parents, which impresses children. They may witness much temper; but if they see their father "keep the even tenor of his way," his imperfections will be understood and allowed for, as reason opens. The child will see and reflect on his parent's intention: and this will have great influence on his mind. This influence may, indeed, be afterward counteracted: but that only proves that contrary currents may arise, and carry the child another way. Old Adam may be too strong for young Melancthon.

The implantation of principles is of unspeakable importance, especially when culled from time to time out of the Bible. The child feels his parent's authority supported by the Bible, and the authority of the Bible supported by his parent's weight and influence. Here are data—fixed data. A man can very seldom get rid of these principles. They stand in his way. He wishes to forget them, perhaps; but it is impossible.

Where parental influence does not convert, it hampers. It hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious mother, who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them. I was a professed infidel: but then I liked to be an infidel in company, rather than when alone. I was wretched when by myself. These principles, and maxims, and data spoiled my jollity. With my companions I could sometimes stifle them: like embers, we kept one another warm. Besides, I was here a sort of hero. I had beguiled several of my associates into my own opinions, and had to maintain a character before them. But I could not divest myself of my better principles. I went with one of my companions to see "The Minor." He could laugh heartily at mother Cole—I could not. He saw in her the picture of all who talked about religion—I knew better. The ridicule on regeneration was high sport to him—to me, it was none: it could not move my features. He knew no difference between regeneration and transubstantiation—I did. I knew there was such a thing. I was afraid and ashamed to laugh at it. Parental influence thus cleaves to a man: it harasses him—it throws itself continually in his way.

I find in myself another evidence of the greatness of parental influence. I detect myself, to this day, in laying down maxims in my family, which I took up at three or four years of age, before I could possibly know the reason of the thing.

It is of incalculable importance to obtain a hold on the conscience. Children have a conscience; and it is not seared, though it is evil. Bringing the eternal world into their view—planning and acting with that world before us—this gains, at length, such a hold on them, that, with all the infidel poison which they may afterward imbibe, there are few children who, at night—in their chamber—in the dark—in a storm of thunder—will not feel. They

cannot cheat like other men. They recollect that ETERNITY, which stands in their way. It rises up before them, like the ghost of Banquo to Macbeth. It goads them: it thunders in their ears. After all, they are obliged to compound the matter with conscience, if they cannot be prevailed on to return to God without delay:—"I must be religious, one time or other. That is clear. I cannot get rid of this thing. Well! I will begin at such a time. I will finish such a scheme, and then!"

The opinions—the spirit—the conversation—the manners of the parent, influence the child. Whatever sort of man he is, such, in a great degree, will be the child; unless constitution or accident give him another turn. If the parent is a fantastic man—if he is a genealogist, knows nothing but who married such an one, and who married such an one—if he is a sensualist, a low wretch—his children will usually catch these tastes. If he is a literary man—his very girls will talk learnedly. If he is a griping, hard, miserly man—such will be his children. This I speak of as GENERALLY the case. It may happen, that the parent's disposition may have no ground to work on in that of the child. It may happen, that the child may be driven into disgust: the miser, for instance, often implants disgust, and his son becomes a spendthrift.

After all, in some cases, perhaps, every thing seems to have been done and exhibited by the pious parent in vain. Yet he *casts his bread upon the waters*. And, perhaps, after he has been in his grave twenty years, his son remembers what his father told him.

Besides, parental influence must be great, because God has said that it shall be so. The parent is not to stand reasoning and calculating. God has said that his character shall have influence.

And this appointment of Providence becomes often the punishment of a wicked man. Such a man is a complete SELFIST. I am weary of hearing such men talk about their "family"—and their "family"—they "must provide for their family." Their family has no place in their REAL REGARD. They push for themselves. But God says—"No! You think your children shall be so and so. But they shall be rods for your own backs. They shall be your curse. They shall rise up against you." The most common of all human complaints is—Parents groaning under the vices of their children! This is all the effect of parental influence.

In the exercise of this influence there are two leading dangers to be avoided.

Excess of SEVERITY is one danger. My mother, on the contrary, would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath—but wept too when I got into the street. Sympathy is the powerful engine of a mother. I was desperate—I would go on board of a privateer. But there are soft moments to such desperadoes. God does not, at once, abandon them to themselves. There are times when the man says—"I should be glad to return, but I should not like to meet

that face!" if he has been treated with severity.

Yet excess of LAXITY is another danger. The case of Eli affords a serious warning on this subject. Instead of his mild expostulation on the flagrant wickedness of his sons—*Nay, my sons, it is no good report that I hear*—he ought to have exercised his authority as a parent and magistrate in punishing and restraining their crimes.

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Remarks on Authors.

WHEN I look at the *mind* of LORD BACON—it seems vast, original, penetrating, analogical, beyond all competition. When I look at his *character*—it is wavering, shuffling, mean. In the closing scene, and in that only, he appears in true dignity, as a man of profound contrition.

BAXTER surpasses, perhaps, all others, in the grand, impressive, and persuasive style. But he is not to be named with Owen, as to furnishing the student's mind. He is, however, multifarious, complex, practical.

CLARKE has, above all other men, the faculty of lowering the life and spiritual sense of Scripture to such perfection, as to leave it like dry bones, divested of every particle of marrow or oil. SOUTH is nearer the truth. He tells more of it: but he tells it with the tongue of a viper, for he was most bitterly set against the puritans. But there is a spirit and life about him. He must and will be heard. And now and then, he darts on us with an unexpected and incomparable stroke.

THE MODERN GERMAN WRITERS, and the whole school formed after them, systematically and intentionally confound vice and virtue, and argue for the passions against the morals and institutions of society. There never was a more dangerous book written, than one that Mrs. WOLSTONCRAFT left imperfect, but which Mr. GODWIN published after her death. Her "Wrongs of Women" is an artful apology for adultery: she labors to interest the feelings in favor of an adulteress, by making her crime the consequence of the barbarous conduct of a despicable husband, while she is painted all softness and sensibility. Nothing like this was ever attempted before the modern school.

"SOME BICH," says Dr. Patten to me, "are always crying fire! fire!" To be sure—where there is danger, there ought to be affectionate earnestness. Who would remonstrate, coldly and with indifference, with a man about to precipitate himself from Dover Cliff, and not rather snatch him forcibly from destruction? Truth, in its living influence on the heart, will show itself in consecratedness and holy zeal. When teachers of religion are destitute of these qualities, the world readily infers that religion itself is a farce. Let us do the world justice. It has very seldom found a considerate, accommodating, and gentle, but withal earnest, heavenly, and enlightened

teacher. When it has found such, truth has received a very general attention. Such a man was HERVEY, and his works have met their reward.

HOMER approaches nearest of all the heathen poets to the grandeur of Hebrew poetry. With the theological light of Scripture, he would have wonderfully resembled it.

HOOKE is incomparable in strength and sanctity. His first books are wonderful. I do not so perfectly meet him, as he advances toward the close.

LOSKIEL'S "Account of the Moravian Missions among the North American Indians" has taught me two things. I have found in it a striking illustration of the *uniformity with which the grace of God operates on men*. Crantz, in his "Account of the Missions in Greenland," had shown the grace of God working on a man-fish: on a stupid, sottish, senseless creature—scarcely a remove from the fish on which he lived. Loskiel shows the same grace working on a man-devil: a fierce, bloody, revengeful warrior—dancing his infernal waltz with the mind of a fury. Divine grace brings these men to the same point. It quickens, stimulates, and elevates the Greenlanders: it raises him to a sort of new life: it seems almost to bestow on him new senses: it opens his eye, and bends his ear, and rouses the heart: and what it adds—it sanctifies. The same grace tames the high spirit of the Indian: it reduces him to the meekness, and docility, and simplicity of a child. The evidence arising to Christianity from these facts is, perhaps, seldom sufficient, by itself, to *convince the gainsayer*: but, to a man who already believes, it greatly strengthens the reasons of his belief. I have seen also in these books, that the fish-boat, and the oil, and the tomahawk, and the cap of feathers excepted, a *Christian minister has to deal with just the same sort of creatures as the Greenlanders and the Indian, among civilized nations*.

OWEN stands at the head of his class of divines. His scholars will be more profound and enlarged, and better furnished, than those of most other writers. His work on the Spirit has been my treasure-house and one of my very first rate books. Such writers as RICCALTON rather disqualify than prepare a minister for the immediate business of the pulpit. Original and profound thinkers enlarge his views, and bring into exercise the powers and energies of his own mind, and should therefore be his daily companions. Their matter must, however, be ground down before it will be fit for the pulpit. Such writers as Owen, who, though less original, have united detail with wisdom, are copious in proper topics, and in matter better prepared for immediate use, and in furniture ready finished, as it were, for the mind.

PALEY is an unsound casuist, and is likely to

do great injury to morals. His extenuation of the crimes committed by an intoxicated man, for instance, is fallacious and dangerous. Multiply the crime of intoxication into the consequences that follow from it, and you have the sum total of the guilt of a drunken man.

RUTHERFORD'S Letters is one of my classics. Were truth the beam, I have no doubt, that if Homer and Virgil and Horace, and all that the world has agreed to idolize, were weighed against that book, they would be lighter than vanity. He is a real original. There are in his letters some inexpressibly forcible and arresting remonstrances with unconverted men.

I SHOULD not recommend a young minister to pay much deference to the SCOTCH DIVINES. The Erskines, who were the best of them, are dry, and labored, and prolix, and wearisome. He may find incomparable matter in them, but he should beware of forming his taste and manner after their model. I want a more kind-hearted and liberal sort of divinity. He had much better take up Bishop Hall. There is a set of excellent, but wrong-headed men, who would reform the London preachers on a more elaborate plan. They are not philosophers who talk thus. If Owen himself were to rise from the grave, unless it were for the influence of the great name which he would bring with him, he might close his days with a small congregation, in some little meeting-house.

SHAKESPEARE had a low and licentious taste. When he chose to imagine a virtuous and exalted character, he would completely throw his mind into it, and give the perfect picture of such a character. But he is at home in Falstaff. No high, grand, virtuous, religious aim beams forth in him. A man, whose heart and taste are modelled on the Bible, nauseates him in the mass, while he is enraptured and astonished by the flashes of his pre-eminent genius.

"HAVE you read my Key to the Romans?" said Dr. TAYLOR, of Norwich, to Mr. NEWTON.—"I have turned it over."—"You have turned it over! And is this the treatment a book must meet with, which has cost me many years of hard study? Must I be told, at last, that you have 'turned it over,' and then thrown it aside? You ought to have read it carefully, and weighed deliberately what comes forward on so serious a subject."—"Hold! You have cut me out full employment, if my life were to be as long as Methuselah's. I have somewhat else to do in the short day allotted me, than to read whatever any one may think it his duty to write. When I read, I wish to read to good purpose; and there are some books, which contradict on the very face of them what appear to me to be first principles. You surely will not say I am bound to read such books. If a man tells me he has a very elaborate argument to prove that two and two make five, I have something else to do than to attend to

this argument. If I find the first mouthful of meat which I take from a fine looking joint on my table is tainted, I need not eat through it to be convinced I ought to send it away."

I NEVER read any sermons so much like WHITEFIELD'S manner of preaching as LATIMER'S.—You see a simple mind uttering all its feelings; and putting forth every thing as it comes, without any reference to books or men, with a *naïveté* seldom equalled.

I ADMIRED WITSIUS'S "Economy of the Covenants," but not so much as many persons.—There is too much system. I used to study commentators and systems; but I am come almost wholly, at length, to the Bible. Commentators are excellent in general, where there are but few difficulties: but they leave the harder knot still untied. I find in the Bible, the more I read, a grand peculiarity, that seems to say to all who attempt to systematize it, "I am not of your kind. I am not amenable to your methods of thinking. I am untractable in your hand. I stand alone. The great and wise shall never exhaust my treasures.—By figures and parables I will come down to the feelings and understandings of the ignorant. Leave me as I am, but study me incessantly." CALVIN'S Institutes are, to be sure, great and admirable, and so are his Commentaries; but after all, if we must have commentators—as we certainly must—POOL is incomparable, and I had almost said abundant of himself.

YOUNG is, of all other men, one of the most striking examples of the disunion of piety from truth. If we read his most true, impassioned, and impressive estimate of the world and of religion, we shall think it impossible that he was uninfluenced by his subject. It is, however, a melancholy fact, that he was hunting after preferment at eighty years old; and felt and spoke like a disappointed man. The truth was pictured on his mind in most vivid colors. He felt it, while he was writing. He felt himself on a retired spot: and he saw death, the mighty hunter, pursuing the unthinking world. He saw redemption—its necessity and its grandeur; and while he looked on it, he spoke as a man would speak whose mind and heart are deeply engaged. Notwithstanding all this, the view did not reach his heart. Had I preached in his pulpit with the fervor and interest that his "Night Thoughts" discover, he would have been terrified. He told a friend of mine, who went to him under religious fears, that he MUST GO MORE INTO THE WORLD!

ON THE SCRIPTURES.

Miscellaneous Remarks on the Scriptures.

I AM an entire disciple of Butler. He calls his book "Analogy;" but the great subject, from beginning to end, is HUMAN IGNORANCE. Berkeley has done much to reduce man to a right view of his attainments in real know-

ledge; but he goes too far: he requires a demonstration of self-evident truths: he requires me to demonstrate that that table is before me. Beattie has well replied to this error, in his "Immutability of Truth;" though it pleased Mr. Hume to call that book—"Philosophy for the Ladies."

Metaphysicians seem born to puzzle and confound mankind. I am surprised to hear men talk of their having demonstrated such and such points. Even Andrew Baxter, one of the best of these metaphysicians, though he reasons and speculates well, has not demonstrated to my mind one single point by his reasonings. They know nothing at all on the subject of moral and religious truth, beyond what God has revealed. I am so deeply convinced of this, that I can sit by and smile at the fancies of these men; and especially when they fancy they have found out DEMONSTRATIONS. Why, there are demonstrators, who will carry the world before them; till another man rises, who demonstrates the very opposite, and then, of course, the world follows him!

We are mere mites creeping on the earth, and oftentimes conceited mites too. If any superior being will condescend to visit us and teach us, something may be known. "Has God spoken to man?" This is the most important question that can be asked. All ministers should examine this matter to the foundation. Many are culpably negligent herein. But, when this has been done, let there be no more questionings and surmises. My son is not, perhaps, convinced that I am entitled to be his teacher. Let us try. If he finds that he knows more than I do—well: if he finds that he knows nothing, and submits—I am not to renew this conviction in his mind every time he chooses to require me to do so.

If any honest and benevolent man felt scruples in his breast concerning Revelation, he would hide them there; and would not move wretched men from the only support which they can have in this world. I am thoroughly convinced of the want of real integrity and benevolence in all infidels. And I am as thoroughly convinced of the want of real belief of the Scriptures in most of those who profess to believe them.

Metaphysicians can unsettle things, but they can erect nothing. They can pull down a church, but they cannot build a hovel. The Hutchinsonians have said the best things about the metaphysicians. I am no Hutchinsonian; yet I see that they have data, and that there is something worth proving in what they assert.

PRINCIPLE is to be distinguished from PREJUDICE. The man who should endeavor to weaken my belief of the truth of the Bible, and of the fair deduction from it of the leading doctrines of religion, under the notion of their being prejudices, should be regarded by me as an assassin. He stabs me in my dearest hopes: he robs me of my solid happiness; and he has no equivalent to offer. This spe-

cies of evidence of the truth and value of Scripture is within the reach of all men. It is my strongest. It assures me as fully as a voice could from heaven, that my principles are not prejudices. I see in the Bible my heart and the world painted to the life; and I see just that provision made, which is competent to the highest ends and effects on this heart and this world.

THE Bible resembles an extensive and highly cultivated garden, where there is a vast variety and profusion of fruits and flowers: some of which are more essential or more splendid than others; but there is not a blade suffered to grow in it, which has not its use and beauty in the system. Salvation for sinners, is the grand truth presented every where, and in all points of light; but *the pure in heart* sees a thousand traits of the divine character, of himself, and of the world—some striking and bold; others cast, as it were, into the shade, and designed to be searched for and examined—some direct, others by way of intimation or inference.

HE, who reads the Scriptures only in the translation, is meanly prepared as a public teacher. The habit of reading the Scriptures in the original throws a new light and sense over numberless passages. The original has, indeed, been obtruded so frequently, and sometimes so absurdly, on the hearers, that their confidence in the translation has been shaken. The judicious line of conduct herein, is—To think with the wise, and talk with the vulgar—to attain, as far as possible, and by all means, the true sense and force of every passage; and, wherever that differs from the received translation, work it in imperceptibly, that the hearers may be instructed, while they receive no prejudice against that form in which they enjoy the Scriptures.

No man will preach the Gospel so FREELY as the Scriptures preach it, unless he will submit to talk like an Antinomian, in the estimation of a great body of Christians; nor will any man preach it so PRACTICALLY as the Scriptures, unless he will submit to be called, by as large a body, an Arminian. Many think that they find a middle path: which is, in fact, neither one thing nor another; since it is not the incomprehensible, but grand plan of the Bible. It is somewhat of human contrivance. It savors of human poverty and littleness.

WERE the Scriptures required to supply a direct answer to every question which even a sincere inquirer might ask, it would be impracticable. They form, even now, a large volume. The method of instruction adopted in them is, therefore, this:—The rule is given: the doctrine is stated: examples are brought forward—cases in point, which illustrate the rule and the doctrine: and this is found sufficient for every upright and humble mind.

THE simple and unprejudiced study of the

Bible is the death of religious extravagance. —Many read it under a particular bias of the mind. They read books, written by others, under the same views. Their preaching and conversation run in the same channel. If they could awaken themselves from this state, and come to read the whole Scripture for every thing which they could find there, they would start as from a dream—amazed at the humble, meek, forbearing, holy, heavenly character of the simple religion of the Scriptures, to which, in a greater or less degree, their eyes had been blinded.

THE right way of interpreting Scripture, is, to take it as we find it, without any attempt to force it into any particular system. Whatever may be fairly inferred from Scripture, we need not fear to insist on. Many passages speak the language of what is called Calvinism, and that in almost the strongest terms: I would not have a man clip and curtail these passages, to bring them down to some system: let him go with them in their free and full sense; for otherwise, if he do not absolutely pervert them, he will attenuate their energy. But, let him look at as many more, which speak the language of Arminianism, and let him go all the way with these also. God has been pleased thus to state and to leave the thing; and all our attempts to distort it, one way or the other, are puny and contemptible.

A MAN may find much amusement in the Bible—variety of prudential instruction—abundance of sublimity and poetry: but, if he stops there, he stops short of its great end; for, *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*. The grand secret in the study of the Scriptures, is, to discover Jesus Christ therein, *the way, the truth, and the life*.

In reading the Scriptures, we are apt to think God farther removed from us, than from the persons to whom he spake therein: the knowledge of God will rectify this error; as if God could be farther from us than from them. In reading the Old Testament especially, we are apt to think that the things spoken there, in the prophet Hosea, for instance, have little relation to us: the knowledge taught by Christian experience will rectify this error: as if religion were not always the SAME SORT of transaction between God and the soul.

THERE are two different ways of treating the truths of the Gospel—the SCIENTIFIC and the SIMPLE. It was seriously given me in charge, when I first entered into the ministry, by a female who attended my church, that I should study Baxter's "Catholic Theology." I did so: but the best idea that I acquired from this labor was, that the most sagacious and subtle men can make out little beyond the plain, obvious, and broad statement of truth in the Scriptures. I should think it a very proper and suitable punishment for a conceited and pragmatical dogmatist, to oblige

him to digest that book. Another great truth, indeed, we may gather from it; and that is, that the intemperate men, on either side, are very little aware of the consequences which may be legitimately drawn from their principles.—Even Dr. Owen has erred. I would not compare him, in this respect, with Baxter; for he has handled his points with far greater wisdom and simplicity: yet he errs *ex abundanti*. He attempts to make out things with more accuracy, and clearness, and system, than the Bible will warrant. The Bible scorns to be treated scientifically. After all your accurate statements, it will leave you aground. The Bible does not come round, and ask our opinion of its contents. It proposes to us a constitution of grace, which we are to receive, though we do not wholly comprehend it. Numberless questions may be started on the various parts of this constitution. Much of it I cannot understand, even of what respects myself; but I am called to act on it. And this is agreeable to analogy. My child will ask me questions on the fitness or unfitness of what I enjoin: but I silence him: "You are not yet able to comprehend this: your business is, to believe me and obey me." But the schoolmen will not be satisfied with this view of things: yet they can make nothing out satisfactorily. They have their *de re*, and their *de nomine*; but nothing is gained by these attempts at clearness and nice distinctions. These very accurate men, who think they adjust every thing with precision, cannot agree among one another, and do little else than puzzle plainer minds.

WHATEVER definitions men have given of religion, I can find none so accurately descriptive of it as this—that it is such a belief of the Bible as maintains a living influence on the heart. —Men may speculate, criticise, admire, dispute about, doubt, or believe the Bible: but the RELIGIOUS MAN is such because he so believes it, as to carry habitually a practical sense of its truths on his mind.

THE fears of the general class of Christians are concerned about the superstructure of religion; but those of speculative minds chiefly relate to the foundation. The less thinking man doubts whether he is on the foundation: he whose mind is of a more intellectual turn doubts concerning the foundation itself. I have met with many of these speculative cases. Attacks of this nature are generally sudden. A suspicion will, by surprise, damp the heart; and, for a time, will paint the Bible as a fable. I have found it useful, on such occasions, to glance over the whole thread of Scripture. The whole presented in such a view, brings back the mind to its proper tone: the indelible characters of simplicity and truth impress with irresistible effect that heart, which can discern them as having once felt them.

On the Old and New Dispensations.

THE Old and New Testaments contain but

one scheme of religion. Neither part of this scheme can be understood without the other; and, therefore, great errors have arisen from separating them. They are like the rolls on which they were anciently written, before books of the present form were invented. It is but one subject and one system, from beginning to end; but the view which we obtain of it grows clearer and clearer, as we unwind the roll that contains it.

THERE is one grand and striking feature of distinction between the spirit of the Old Testament dispensation and that of the New.

The Old Dispensation was a dispensation of limits, waymarks, forms, and fashions: every thing was weighed and measured: if a man did but gather sticks on the Sabbath, he was to be stoned without mercy; if a Jew brought an offering, it was of no avail if not presented at the door of the tabernacle: the manner, the time, the circumstances were all minutely instituted; and no devotion or piety of spirit could exempt a man from the yoke of all these observances, for God had appointed these as the way in which he chose that a devout Jew should express his state of mind.

But the New Dispensation changed the whole system. Religion was now to become more peculiarly a spiritual transaction between God and the soul; and independent, in a higher measure than ever before, of all positive institutions. Its few, simple institutions had no further object than the preservation of the unity, order, soundness, and purity of the church—in regard to doctrine, government, and discipline.

Nor had these appointments that character of unaccommodating inflexibility, which marked the institutions of the Old Dispensation. All nations, men of all habits and manners, are to drink life from the beneficent stream as it flows. It is to throw down no obstructions that are not absolutely incompatible with its progress. But it is appointed to pervade every place which it visits. Some, it enters without obstruction, and passes directly through. In some, it meets with mounds and obstacles; yet rises till it finds an entrance. Others are so fenced and fortified, that it winds round them and flows forward: continuing to do so, till it, at length, finds some method of insinuating itself.

And thus the dispensation of grace in the church accommodates itself to the various tempers and habits which it finds in different ages, nations, and bodies of men; it leaves in existence numberless opinions and prejudices, if they are not inconsistent with its main design, and mingles and insinuates itself among them. It has not limited Christianity to any one form of church polity, ordained and perfected in all its parts by divine authority: but Christians are left to act herein according to circumstances, and to the exercise of sound discretion under those circumstances.

On Typical and Allegorical Explanations of Scripture.

It might be expected, that, when God had

determined to send his Son into the world, there would be a train and concatenation of circumstances preparatory to his coming—that the history, which declared that he was to come, should exhibit many persons and things, which would form a grand preparation for the event, though not so many as an absurd fancy might imagine.

There is a certain class of persons who wish to rid themselves of the types. Sikes insists that even the brazen serpent is called in by our Lord by way of illustration only, and not as a designed type. Robinson, of Cambridge, when he began to verge toward Socinianism, began to ridicule the types; and to find matter of sport in the pomegranates and the bells of the high priest's garment. At all events, the subject should not be treated with levity and irreverence: it deserves serious reflection.

With respect to the expediency of employing the types much in the pulpit, that is another question. I seldom employ them. I am zealous for truth and its sanctions. The Old Dispensation was a typical dispensation; but the New is a dispensation unrolled. When speaking of the typical dispensation, we must admire a master, like St. Paul. But to us, modesty becomes a duty in treating such subjects in our ministry. Remember, "*This is none other but the house of God! and this is the gate of heaven!*" How dreadful if I lead thousands with nonsense!—if I lose the opportunity of impressing solid truths!—if I waste their precious time!"

A minister should say to himself: "I would labor to cut off occasions of objecting to the truth. I would labor to grapple with men's consciences. I would show them that there is no strange twist in our view of religion. I must avoid, as much as possible, having my judgment called in question: many watch for this, and will avail themselves of any advantage. Some who hear me, are thus continually seeking excuses for not listening to the warnings and invitations of the word: they are endeavoring to get out of our reach; but I would hold them fast by such passages as, "*What shall a man give in exchange for his soul!*"

Many men labor to make the Bible **THEIR** Bible. This is one way of getting its yoke off their necks. The MEANING, however, of the Bible is the Bible. If I preach, then, on imputed righteousness, for instance, why should I preach from, *the skies pour down righteousness*; and then anathematize men for not believing the doctrine, when it is not declared in the passage, and there are hundreds of places so expressly to the point!

Most of the folly on this subject of allegorical interpretation, has arisen from the want of holy awe on the mind. An evil fashion may lead some men into it; and, so far, the case is somewhat extenuated. We should ever remember, however, that it is a very different thing to allegorize the New Dispensation from allegorizing the Old: the New is a dispensation of substance and realities.

When a careless young man, I remember to have felt alarms in my conscience from some

preachers; while others, from this method of treating their subjects, let me off easily. I heard the man as a weak allegorizer; I despised him as a foolish preacher: till I met with some plain, simple, solid man, who seized and urged the obvious meaning. I shall, therefore, carry to my grave a deep conviction of the danger of entering far into typical and allegorical interpretations.

Accommodation of Scripture, if sober, will give variety. The apostles do this so far as to show that it may have its use and advantage. It should, however, never be taken as a ground-work, but employed only in the way of allusion. I may use the passage, *there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*, by way of allusion to Christ; but I cannot employ it as the ground-work of a discourse on him.

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On the Diversity of Character in Christians on correcting the Defects in our Character.

IN DISCOVERING AND COUNTERACTING THE DEFECTS OF OUR OWN CHARACTER, it is of chief importance that we really *intend* to ascertain the truth.

The INTENTION is extremely defective in us all. The man who thinks he has such honest intention, yet has it very imperfectly. He says—"Touch me: but touch me like a gentleman. Do not intrude on the delicacies of society." The real meaning of which is, that he has no intention of hearing the truth from you. A man, who has a wound to be healed, comes to a surgeon with such an intention to get it healed, that if he suspected his skill or his fidelity he would seek another.

Intention, or a man's really desiring to know the truth concerning himself, would produce ATTENTION. He would soon find, that there is little close business in a man who does not withdraw from the world.

He will begin with self-suspicion. "Perhaps I am such or such a man. I see defects in all my friends, and I must be a madman not to suppose that I also have mine. I see defects in my friends which they not only do not themselves see: but they will not suffer others to show these defects to them. I must, therefore, take it for granted that I am a more foolish and pragmatical fellow than I can conceive."

If he begin thus, then he will be willing to proceed a step farther: "Let me try if I cannot reach these defects." I have found out myself by seeing my picture in another man. I would choose men of my own constitution: other men would give me no proper picture of myself. In such men, I can see actions to be ridiculous or absurd, when I could not have seen them to be so in myself. We may learn some features of our portrait from enemies: an enemy gives a hard feature, probably, but it is often a truer likeness than can be obtained from a friend. What with your friend's tenderness for you, and your own tenderness for yourself, you cannot get at the true feature. We should, moreover, encourage our friends. You cannot, in one case in ten, go

to a man on a business of this nature, without offending him. He will allege such and such excuses for the defect, and fritter it away to nothing. This shows the hypocrisy—the falsehood—the self-love—and the flattery of the heart. This endeavor to conceal or palliate defects, instead of a desire to discover them, grows up with us from infancy. There is something so deceitful in sin! A man is brought to *believe his own lie*! He is so accustomed to hide himself from himself, that he is surprised when another detects and unmasks him. Hazael verily believed himself incapable of becoming what the prophet foretold.

Many motives urge us to attempt a rectification of our defects. Consider the importance of character: he, who says he cares not what men think of him, is on a very low form in the school of experience and wisdom: character and money effect almost every thing. It should be considered, too, how much we have smarted for want of attending to our defects: nineteen out of twenty of our smarting times arise from this cause.

In counteracting our defects, however, we should be cautious not to blunder by imitation of others. There are such men in the world as saint-errants. One of these men takes up the History of Ignatius Loyola; and nothing seems worthy of his endeavor, but to be just such a man, in all the extravagancies of his character and conduct. We should search till we find where our character fails, and then amend it—not attempt to become another man.

A wise man, who is seriously concerned to learn the truth respecting himself, will not spurn it even from a fool. The great men, who kept fools in their retinue, learned more truth from them than from their companions. A real self-observer will ask whether there is any truth in what the fool says of him. Nay, a truth, that may be uttered in envy or anger, will not lose its weight with him. The man, who is determined to find happiness, must bear to have it even beaten into him. No man ever found it by chance, or "yawned it into being with a wish." When I was young, my mother had a servant whose conduct I thought truly wise. A man was hired to brew; and this servant was to watch his method, in order to learn his art. In the course of the process, something was done which she did not understand. She asked him, and he abused her, with the vilest epithets, for her ignorance and stupidity. My mother asked her, when she related it, how she bore such abuse. "I would be called," said she, "worse names a thousand times, for the sake of the information which I got out of him."

If a man would seriously set himself to this work, he must retire from the crowd. He must not live in a bustle. If he is always driving through the business of the day, he will be so in harness as not to observe the road he is going.

He must place perfect standards before his

eyes. Every man has his favorite notions; and, therefore, no man is a proper standard. The perfect standard is only to be found in Scripture. Elijah meets Ahab, and holds up the perfect standard before his eyes, till he shrinks into himself.* I have found great benefit in being sickened and disgusted with the false standards of men. I turn, with stronger convictions, to the perfect standard of God's word.

He should also *commune with his own heart upon his bed*—"How did I fall, at such or such a time, into my peculiar humors! Had any other man done so, I should have lost my patience with him."

Above all, he must make his defects matter of constant prayer—*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

MEN are to be estimated, as Johnson says, by the MASS OF CHARACTER. A block of tin may have a grain of silver, but still it is tin; and a block of silver may have an alloy of tin, but still it is silver. The mass of Elijah's character was excellence; yet he was not without the alloy. The mass of Jehu's character was base; yet he had a portion of zeal which was directed by God to great ends. Bad men are made the same use of as scaffolds: they are employed as means to erect a building, and then are taken down and destroyed.

We must make great allowance for constitution. I could name a man, who, though a good man, is more unguarded in his tongue than many immoral persons: shall I condemn him? he breaks down here, and almost here only. On the other hand, many are so mild and gentle, as to make one wonder how such a character could be formed, without true grace entering into its composition.

God has given to every man a peculiar constitution. No man is to say, "I am such or such a man, and I can be no other—such or such is my way, and I am what God made me." This is true, in a sound sense: but, in an unsound sense, it has led men foolishly and wickedly to charge their eccentricities, and even their crimes, on God. It is every man's duty to understand his own constitution; and to apply to it the rein or the spur, as it may need. All men cannot do, nor ought they to do, all things in the same way, nor even the same things. But there are common points of duty, on which all men of all habits are to meet. The free horse is to be checked, perhaps, up-hill, and the sluggish one to be urged; but the same spirit, which would have exhausted itself before, shows itself probably in resistance down-hill, when he feels the breeching press upon him behind; but he must be whipped out of his resistance.

THERE is a large class of Christians, who want discrimination in religion. They are sound and excellent men, but they are not men of deep experience. They are not men of Owen's, Gilpin's, Rutherford's, Adams's, or Brainerd's school. They have a general, but not a minute, acquaintance with the combat between sin and grace in the heart. I have learned not to bring deeply experimental subjects before such persons. They cannot understand them, but are likely to be distressed by them. This difference between persons of genuine piety arises from constitution—or from the manner in which the grace of God first met them—or from the nature and degree of temptation through which God has led them. A mind finely constituted, or of strong passions—a mind roused in its sins, rather than one drawn insensibly—a mind trained in a severe school for high services—is generally the subject of this deeply interior acquaintance with religion.

THERE is a great diversity of character among real Christians. Education, constitution, and circumstances will fully explain this diversity.

He has seen but little of life, who does not discern every where the effects of EDUCATION on men's opinions and habits of thinking. Two children bring out of the nursery that which displays itself throughout their lives. And who is the man that can rise above his dispensation, and can say, "You have been teaching me nonsense?"

AS TO CONSTITUTION—look at Martin Luther: we may see the man every day: his eyes, and nose, and mouth, attest his character. Look at Melancthon: he is like a snail, with his couple of horns: he puts out his horns, and feels—and feels—and feels. No education could have rendered these two men alike. Their difference began in the womb. Luther dashes in saying his things: Melancthon must go round about—he must consider what the Greek says, and what the Syriac says. Some men are born minute men—lexicographers—of a German character: they will hunt through libraries to rectify a syllable. Other men are born keen as a razor: they have a sharp, severe, strong acumen: they cut every thing to pieces: their minds are like a case of instruments; touch which you will, it wounds: they crucify a modest man. Such men should aim at a right knowledge of character. If they attained this, they would find out the sin that easily besets them. The greater the capacity of such men, the greater their cruelty. They ought to blunt their instruments. They ought to keep them in a case. Other men are ambitious—fond of power: pride and power give a velocity to their motions. Others are born with a quiet, retiring mind. Some are naturally fierce, and others naturally mild and placable. Men often take to themselves great credit for what they owe entirely to nature. If we would judge rightly, we should see that narrowness or expansion of mind, niggardliness or generosity, delicacy or boldness have

* 1 Kings xviii, 17, &c.

less of merit or demerit than we commonly assign to them.

CIRCUMSTANCES, also, are not sufficiently taken into the account, when we estimate character. For example—we generally censure the Reformers and Puritans as dogmatical, morose, systematic men. But, it is easier to walk on a road, than to form that road. *Other men labored, and we have entered into their labors.* In a fine day, I can walk abroad; but, in a rough and stormy day, I should find it another thing to turn coachman and dare all weathers. These men had to bear the burden and heat of the day: they had to fight against hard times: they had to stand up against learning and power. Their times were not like ours: a man may now think what he will, and nobody cares what he thinks. A man of that school was, of course, stiff, rigid, unyielding. Tuckney was such a man: Winchcot was for smoothing things, and walking abroad. We see circumstances operating in many other ways. A minister unmarried, and the same man married, are very different men. A minister in a small parish, and the same man in a large sphere where his sides are spurred and goaded, are very different men. A minister on tenter-hooks—harassed—schooled, and the same man nursed—cherished—put into a hot-house, are very different men. Some of us are hot-house plants. We grow tall: not better—not stronger. Talents are among the circumstances which form the diversity of character. A man of talents feels his own powers, and throws himself into that line which he can pursue with most success. Saurin felt that he could flourish—lighten—thunder—enchant, like a magician. Every one should seriously consider how far his talents and turn of mind and circumstances drive him out of the right road. It is an easy thing for a man of vigor to bring a quiet one before his bar: and it is easy for this quiet man to condemn the other: yet both may be really pious men—serving God with their best powers. *Every man has his peculiar gift of God; one after this manner, and the other after that.*

On the Fallen Nature of Man.

I SEEM to acquire little new knowledge on any subject, compared to that which I acquire concerning man. This subject is inexhaustible. I have lately read Colquhoun's Treatise on the "Police of the Metropolis," and Barrell's "Memoirs of Jacobinism." When we preachers draw pictures of human nature in the pulpit, we are told that we calumniate it. Calumniate it!—Let such censurers read these writers, and confess that we are novices in painting the vices of the heart. All of us live to make discoveries of the evils of the heart—not of its virtues. All our new knowledge of human nature is occupied with its evil.

BARTHOLOMEW fair is one of the most perfect exhibitions of unrestrained human nature in the whole world. The monkey, the tiger,

the wolf, the hog, and the goat, are not only to be found in their own, but in human form; with all their savageness, brutality, and filthiness. It displays human nature in its most degraded, ridiculous, and absurd conditions. The tiger may be seen in a quiescent state, if we pass through Dyot street: he couches there: he blinks. But, at Bartholomew fair, he is rampant—vigorous—fierce. Passing through a fair in a country town, I witnessed a most instructive scene. Two withered, weatherbeaten wretches were standing at the door of a show-cart, and receiving two-pences from sweet, innocent, ruddy country girls, who paid their money, and dropped their courtesies; while these wretches smiled at their simplicity, and clapped them on the back as they entered the door. What a picture this of Satan! He sets off his shows, and draws in heedless creatures, and takes from them every thing they have good about them! There was a fellow dressed out as a zany, with a hump back and a hump belly, a lengthened nose, and a lengthened chin. To what a depth of degradation must human nature be sunk, to seek such resources! I derived more instruction from this scene, than I could have done from many elaborate theological treatises.

VIEW man on whatever side we can—in his sensualities, or in his ferocities—in the sins of his flesh, or in the sins of his spirit; catch him when and where you will—his condition is deplorable. While he is sunk in the mass himself, he has no perception of his state: but when he begins to emerge, he looks down with amazement. He sees but little, however, of its abomination; because he has still an affinity with the evil.

HUMAN nature is like the sea, which gains by the flow of the tide in one place, what it has lost by the ebb in another. A man may acquiesce in the method which God takes to mortify his pride; but he is in danger of growing proud of the mortification: and so in other cases.

On the Need of Grace.

THERE is something so remarkable in the genius and spirit of the Gospel, that it is not to be understood by any force of speculation and investigation. Baxter attempted this method, and found it vain. The state of the heart has the chief influence in the search after truth. Humility, contrition, simplicity, sanctity—these are the handmaids of the understanding in the investigation of religion.

How is it that some men labor in divine things night and day, but labor in vain? How is it that men can turn over the Bible from end to end, to support errors and heresies—absurdities and blasphemies? They take not the SPIRIT with the WORD. A spiritual understanding must be given—a gracious perception—a right taste.

"A VERY extraordinary thing," said one, "if I, who have read the Bible over and over in the original languages—have studied it day and night—and have written criticisms and comments on it: a very extraordinary thing that I should not be able to discover that meaning in the Scriptures, which is said to be so plain that a *way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err in discovering it!*" And so it is extraordinary till we open this Bible; and there we see the fact explained. The man who approaches the word of God in his own wisdom, shall not find what the fool shall discover under the teaching of divine wisdom: *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent—and God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.*

God, in his providence, seems to make little account of the measures and contrivances of men, in accomplishing his designs. He will do the work, and his hand will be seen in the doing of it. We are obliged to wait for the tide. When that flows, and the wind sets in fair, let us hoist the sails. When the tide has left a ship on the beach, an army may attempt to move it in vain; but when she has floated by the water, a small force moves her. We must wait for openings in Providence. In this light I view the darkness of the heathen world. Let us follow every apparent leading of Providence, in our endeavors to communicate light to the heathen; but, still, the opening and the whole work must be of God. Thousands, indeed, hear the Gospel, who are no more impressed by it than though they were heathens. The minds of some men will stand, as it were, a regular blockade, and yet yield to a side blow—sit unchanged under a searching ministry, and yet fall beneath a casual word. I know such cases. We might account, indeed, for them, in some measure, as philosophers. The mind, which plants itself against and repels the formal and avowed attacks of the preacher, may be surprised by a hint addressed, perhaps, to another: yet, after all, the whole work is of God. We may make very little, therefore, of the vehicle. The Gospel—the wants of men—the indisposition of the heart—and the mighty power of God—are always and universally the same. By whatever vehicle God conveys that mighty energy, which disposes man to find the relief of his wants in the Gospel, *he still is the worker.* It is a divine operation of God's Holy Spirit. If God would raise up heathen princes with the spirit of Peter the Great, or Kouli Khan, and send them forth under the powerful influence of Christianity to proselyte their subjects, we might expect the end to be accomplished: but this is a scheme suited to our littleness, and not to Him, *whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, and whose ways are not as our ways.*

A LADY proposed to me a case, which seemed to her to decide against those views of religion called evangelical. She knew a most amiable girl who was respectful and attentive

to her parents, and engaging and lovely to all connected with her: who had, however, no objection to seeing a play; and had certainly nothing of that, which she knew I should call religion: but she asked if I could believe that God would condemn such a character to everlasting misery. Many persons view things in this way. They set themselves up to dictate to God what should be done, on points which he only can determine. If these persons are ever cured of this evil, it must probably be in some such way as that by which it pleased God to teach Job. Job could assert his integrity and his character against the arguments of his friends; but, when God asked, *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?* Job prostrates his soul with this declaration—*I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*

EVERY thinking man will look round him, when he reflects on his situation in this world; and will ask, "What will meet my case? What is it that I want? What will satisfy me? I look at the RICH—and I see Ahab, in the midst of all his riches, sick at heart for a garden of herbs! I see Dives, after all his wealth, lifting up his eyes in hell, and begging for a drop of water to cool the rage of his sufferings! I see the rich fool summoned away, in the very moment when he was exulting in his hoards! If I look at the WISE—I see Solomon, with all his wisdom, acting like a fool; and I know, that, if I possessed all his wisdom, were I left to myself, I should act as he did. I see Ahithophel, with all his policy, hanging himself for vexation! If I turn to men of PLEASURE—I see that the very sum of all pleasure is, that it is Satan's bed into which he casts his slaves! I see Esau selling his birth-right for a mess of pottage! I see Solomon, after all his enjoyments, leaving his name a scandal to the church to the latest age! If I think of HONOR—I take a walk in Westminster Abbey—there is an end of all inquiry. There I walk among the mighty dead! There is the winding up of human glory! And what remains of the greatest man of my country!—A boasting epitaph! None of these things, then, can satisfy me! I must meet death—I must meet judgment—I must meet God—I must meet eternity!"

On the Occasions of Enmity against Christianity.

THE cause of enmity against real Christianity is in the heart. The angel Gabriel might exhibit the truth, but the heart would rise in enmity. To suppose that there is any way of preaching the cross so as not to offend the world, is to know nothing of the subject.

There are many occasions, however, of calling forth this enmity. Any man, who should bleed me, would put me to pain; but he would greatly aggravate my pain, if he rudely tore my skin. Occasions may render the reception of that truth morally impossible, which, under the most favorable circumstances, is received with difficulty.

IGNORANCE, in ministers, is an occasion of exciting enmity against Christianity. A man may betray ignorance on almost every subject, except the way of salvation. But if others see him to be a fool off his own ground, they will think him a fool on that ground. It is a great error to rail against human learning, so as to imply an undervaluing of knowledge. A man may have little of what is called learning, but he must have knowledge. Bunyan was such a man.

Religious profession was, at first, a CONFLICT—a SACRIFICE: now it is become a TRADE. The world sees this spirit pervade many men: and it is a great occasion of enmity. Men of learning and character have confirmed this impression: they have brought out this mischief, and exhibited it to the world. Let any man look into Warburton's "Doctrine of Grace," and he may sit down and wonder that God should suffer such occasions of enmity to arise.

FANATICAL TIMES furnish another occasion. The days of Cromwell, for instance. The great enemy of godliness will never want instruments to make the best of such subjects of ridicule. As long as such a book as Butler's Hudibras is in the world, it will supply occasions of enmity against real religion.

AN UNHOLY, INSOLENT PROFESSOR OF RELIGION occasions enmity. He scorns and insults mankind. His spirit is such as to give them occasion of condemning the truth which he professes. The world will allow some men to call it to account: they will feel a weight of character in a holy and just man.

ECCENTRICITY, in religious men, is another occasion of enmity. Ask an eccentric man a question: he will stare in your face, and look very spiritual. I knew one of these men who called out to a farmer as he was passing, "Farmer! what do you know of Jesus Christ?" Much spiritual pride lurks under this conduct. There is want of breeding and good sense. The world is led to form wrong associations by such characters: "Religion makes a man a fool, or mad: therefore I will not become religious."

INJUDICIOUS PREACHING increases the offence of the cross. Strange interpretations of Scripture—ludicrous comparisons—silly stories—talking without thinking: these are occasions of enmity.

THE LOOSE AND INDISCREET CONDUCT of professing Christians, particularly of ministers, is another occasion. The world looks at ministers out of the pulpit, to know what they mean when in it.

AN OSTENTATIOUS SPIRIT in a professor of religion does great injury—that *giving out that he is some great one*. Even a child will often detect this spirit, when we think no one discovers it.

THE MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE DEVOTIONAL PART OF PUBLIC SERVICE is sometimes offensive. It is as much as to say, "we mean nothing* by

this service. Have patience, and you shall hear me."

SLIGHTING THE OFFENCE OF IRREGULARITY has done much harm. It was a wise reply of a Spanish minister to his king: "Omit this affair: it is but a ceremony!" "A ceremony! Why the king is a ceremony!"

Good men have given occasion of offence by MAINTAINING SUSPICIOUS CONNEXIONS. There is a wide difference between my not harassing and exposing a doubtful character, and my endorsing and authenticating him.

CONTEMPT OF MEN'S PREJUDICES OF EDUCATION will offend. It was not thus with St. Paul: *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some*.

A WANT OF THE SPIRIT OF THE CROSS IN ITS PROFESSORS increases the offence of the cross—that humility, patience, and love to souls, which animated Christ when he offered himself on the cross for the sins of the world.

These are some of the stumbling-blocks in the way of the world. And *wo unto the world, says our Lord, because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come, but wo unto him by whom the offence cometh!* Every man, who is zealous for the diffusion of true religion, should keep his eye on all occasions of offence, since religion, of itself, and in its own native beauty, has to encounter the natural enmity of the degenerate heart.

On Religious Retirement.

It is difficult to speak on the subject of RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT. I am fully persuaded that most religious tradesmen are defective in this duty, those especially in this great city. I tell every one of them so with whom I am intimately acquainted, and they all contest the point with me.

Yet there are some considerations, which, in my own private judgment concerning the thing, lead me to think that the religion of a great city is to be viewed in an aspect of its own. I say not this to those men whom I see endangered by the spirit of such a place. Give them an inch, and they will take an ell. But I learn from it to aim at possibilities, and not to bend the bow till it breaks.

I say, every where and to all—"You must hold intercourse with God, or your soul will die. You must walk with God, or Satan will walk with you. You must *grow in grace*, or you will lose it: and you cannot do this, but by appropriating to this object a due portion of your time, and diligently employing suitable means." But, having said this, I leave it. I cannot limit and define to such men the exact way in which they must apply these principles, but the principles themselves I insist on. What I ought to do myself under my circumstances, I know: and what I ought to do were I in trade, I seem now to know: but what I really should do were I in trade, I know not: and, because I know it not, I am afraid, in telling another man precisely how he ought to apply this principle, that I should act hypocritically and pharisaically. Stated seasons of retirement ought to

* Exodus xii, 26.

be appointed and religiously observed; but the time and the measure of this retirement must be left to a man's own judgment and conscience.

I am restrained from dogmatizing on the subject, by reflecting on the sort of religion which seems in fact to be best suited to human nature itself, and especially to human nature harassed, worried, loaded, and urged as it is in this great city.

But I am restrained also by another consideration.—Difference of character seems to stamp a holy variety on the operation of religious principle. Some men live in a spirit of prayer, who are scarcely able to fix themselves steadily to the solemn act of prayer.—Our characters are so much our own, that, if a man were to come into my family in order to form himself on my model, and to imitate me for a month, it might seriously injure him. I have a favorite walk of twenty steps in my study and chamber: that walk is my oratory: but, if another man were obliged to walk as he prayed, it is very probable he could not pray at all.

In defining the operation of religious principle, I am afraid of becoming an Albert Durer. Albert Durer gave rules for forming the perfect figure of a man. He marked and defined all the relations and proportions. Albert Durer's man became the model of perfection in every Academy in Europe: and now every Academy in Europe has abandoned it, because no such figure was ever found in nature. I am afraid of reducing the variety, which, to a certain degree, may be of God's own forming, to my notion of perfection. "You must maintain and cultivate a spirit of devotion"—I say to all: "but be ye judges, as conscientious men, of the particular means suited to your circumstances."

The spirit of devotion should be our great aim. We are, indeed, buried in sense, and cannot possibly attain or improve this spirit, but by proper means: yet these means are to be adapted and varied to character and situation.

"I must walk with God. In some way or other, whatever be my character or profession, I must acquire the holy habit of connecting every thing that passes in my house and affairs with God. If sickness or health visit my family, my eye must see and my heart must acknowledge the hand of God therein. Whether my affairs move on smoothly or ruggedly, God must be acknowledged in them. If I go out of my house or come into it, I must go out and come in as under the eye of God. If I am occupied in business all day long, I must still have the glory of God in my view. If I have any affair to transact with another, I must pray that God would be with us in that affair, lest we should blunder, and injure and ruin each other."

This is the language of a real Christian. But instead of such a spirit as this among the great body of tradesmen professing themselves religious—what do we see but a driving, impetuous pursuit of the world!—and, in this pursuit, not seldom—mean, low, suspicious, yea, immoral practices

Yet I once went to a friend for the express purpose of calling him out into the world. I said to him—"It is your duty to accept the loan of ten thousand pounds, and to push yourself forward into an ampler sphere." But he was a rare character: and his case was rare. His employers had said, "We are ashamed you should remain so long a servant in our house, with the whole weight of affairs on you. We wish you to enter as a principal with us, and will advance you ten thousand pounds. It is the custom of the city—it is your due—we are dissatisfied to see you in your present sphere." I assured him that it appeared to me to be his duty to accede to the proposal. But I did not prevail. He said—"Sir, I have often heard from you that it is no easy thing to get to heaven. I have often heard from you that it is no easy thing to master the world. I have every thing I wish. More would encumber me—increase my difficulties—and endanger me."

SOLITUDE shows us what we should be: society shows us what we are. Yet, in the theory, solitude shows us our true character better than society. A man in his closet will find nature putting herself forth in actings, which the presence of others would restrain him from bringing into real effect. She schemes and she wishes, here, without reserve. She is pure nature. An enlightened and vigilant self-observer is surprised and alarmed. He puts himself on his guard. He goes forth armed into the world. But society shows him that nature is practically evil. The circumstances of the day as they arise carry him away. If he could abstract himself, and follow the actings of his own mind with an impartial eye, he could not believe himself to be the man who had entered into the world with such holy resolutions.

RECOLLECTION is the life of religion. The Christian wants to know no new thing, but to have his heart elevated more above the world, by secluding himself from it as much as his duties will allow, that religion may effect this its great end by bringing its sublime hopes and prospects into more steady action on the mind.

I know not how it is, that some Christians can make so little of recollection and retirement. I find the spirit of the world a strong assimilating principle. I find it hurrying my mind away in its vortex, and sinking me among the dregs and filth of carnal nature. Even my ministerial employments would degenerate into a mere following of my trade and crying of my wares. I am obliged to withdraw myself regularly, and to say to my heart, "What are you doing!—Where are you?"

On a Spiritual Mind.

DR. OWEN says, if a man of a carnal mind is brought into a large company, he will have much to do: if into a company of Christians, he will feel little interest: if into a smaller

company engaged in religious exercises, he will feel still less: but if taken into a closet and forced to meditate on God and eternity, this will be insupportable!

The spiritual man is born, as it were, into a new world. He has a new taste. He *savors the things of the Spirit*. He turns to God, as the needle to the pole.

This is a subject of which many can understand but little. They want spiritual taste. Nay, they account it enthusiasm. Bishop Horsley will go all the way with Christians into their principles: but he thinks the feelings and desires of a spiritual mind enthusiastical.

There are various CHARACTERISTICS of a spiritual mind.

SELF-LOATHING is a characteristic of such a mind. The axe is laid to the root of a vain-glorious spirit.

It maintains, too, A WALK AND CONVERSE WITH GOD. *Enoch walked with God*. There is a transaction between God and the spiritual mind: if the man feels dead and heartless, that is matter of complaint to God. He looks to God for wisdom for the day—for the hour—for the business in hand.

A spiritual mind REFERS ITS AFFAIRS TO GOD! "Let God's will be obeyed by me in this affair. His way may differ from that which I should choose! but let it be so: *Surely, I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.*"

A spiritual mind has something of the nature of the SENSITIVE PLANT. "I shall smart if I touch this or that." There is a holy shrinking away from evil.

A spiritual mind enjoys, at times, the INFLUX of a HOLY JOY AND SATISFACTION, which surprises even itself. When bereaved of creature comforts, it can sometimes find such a repose in Christ and his promises, that the man can say, "Well! it is enough: let God take from me what else he pleases!"

A spiritual mind is a MORTIFIED mind. The Church of Rome talks much of mortification, but her mortification is not radical and spiritual. Simon Stylites will willingly mortify himself on his pillar, if he can bring people around him to pray to him, to pray for them. But the spiritual mind must mortify itself in whatever would retard its ascent toward heaven: it must rise on the wings of faith, and hope, and love.

A spiritual mind is an INGENUOUS mind. There is a sort of hypocrisy in us all. We are not quite stripped of all disguise. One man wraps round him a covering of one kind, and another of another. They, who think they do not this, yet do it though they know it not.

Yet this spiritual mind is a SUBLIME mind. It has a vast and extended view. It has seen the glory and beauty of Christ, and cannot therefore admire the *goodly buildings* of the temple: as Christ, says Fenelon, had seen his Father's house, and could not therefore be taken with the glory of the earthly structure!

I would urge young persons, when they are staggered by the conversation of people of the world, to dwell on the characteristics of a

spiritual mind. "If you cannot answer their arguments, yet mark their spirit: and mark what a contrary spirit that is which you are called to cultivate."

There are various MEANS of maintaining and promoting a spiritual mind. Beware of saying concerning this or that evil, *Is it not a little one?* Much depends on mortifying the body. There are silent marches which the flesh will steal on us:—the temper is too apt to rise: the tongue will let itself loose: the imagination, if liberty is given to it, will hurry us away. Vain company will injure the mind: carnal professors of religion especially will lower its tone: we catch a contagion from such men. Misemployment of time is injurious to the mind: when reflecting, in illness, on my past years, I have looked back with self-reproach on days spent in my study: I was wading through history, and poetry, and monthly journals; but I was in my study! Another man's trifling is notorious to all observers: but what am I doing!—Nothing, perhaps, that has a reference to the spiritual good of my congregation! I do not speak against a chastised attention to literature, but the abuse of it. Avoid all idleness: *exercise thyself unto godliness*; plan for God. Beware of temptation: the mind, which has dwelt on sinful objects, will be in darkness for days. Associate with spiritually-minded men: the very sight of a good man, though he says nothing, will refresh the soul. Contemplate Christ: be much in retirement and prayer: study the honor and glory of your Master.

On Declension in Religion.

A CHRISTIAN may decline far in religion, without being suspected. He may maintain appearances. Every thing seems to others to go on well. He suspects himself; for it requires great labor to maintain appearances, especially in a minister. Discerning hearers will, however, often detect such declensions. He talks over his old matters. He says his things, but in a cold and unfeeling manner. He is sound, indeed, in doctrine; perhaps more sound than before; for there is a great tendency to soundness of doctrine, when appearances are to be kept up in a declining state of the heart.

Where a man has real grace, it may be part of a dispensation toward him that he is suffered to decline. He walked carelessly. He was left to decline, that he might be brought to feel his need of vigilance. If he is indulging a besetting sin, it may please God to expose him, especially if he is a high-spirited man, that he may hang down his head as long as he lives. He acted thus toward David and Hezekiah. But this is pulling down in order to build up again.

The CAUSES of a decline in religion should be remarked.

The world has always much to do in religious declension. A minister is tempted, perhaps, to sacrifice every thing to a name. If any APPETITE is suffered to prevail, it will

stupify the mind: religion is an abstract and elevated affair: *The way of life above is to the wise, to depart from hell beneath.* KEEPING ON GOOD TERMS WITH THOSE WHO RESPECT US, is a snare. A SPECULATIVE TURN OF MIND is a snare: it leads to that *evil heart of unbelief, which departs from the living God.* VAIN CONFIDENCE thinks himself in no danger: he knows the truth: he can dispute for the truth: "What should we fear?" Why, that we have no fear. TRIFLING WITH CONSCIENCE is a snare: no man indulges himself in any thing which his conscience tells him ought not to be done, but it will at length wear away his spirituality of mind.

THE SYMPTOMS of a religious decline are many:—

When a minister begins to depart from God, and to lose a spiritual mind, he BECOMES FOND SOMETIMES OF GENTEEL COMPANY, who can entertain him, and who know how to respect his character! This genteel spirit is suspicious: it is associated with pride and delicacy, and a love of ease: in short, it is the spirit of the world. It is the reverse of condescending to mean things: it is the reverse of the spirit of our Master.

It is a symptom of decline, when a man will UNNECESSARILY EXPOSE THE IMPERFECTIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD. "Such a man," he will say, "is fond of praying; but he is fond of money." This is the very opposite spirit to that of St. Paul, who speaks *even weeping* of those who *mind earthly things.*

A VIOLENT SECTARIAN SPIRIT is a sign of religious declension. Honest men stand firm for the vitals of religion. If the mind were right, the circumstantialities of religion would not be made matters of fierce contention. The spirit of St. Paul was of another kind. *If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend—One believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him, that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him, which eateth not, judge him that eateth.*

AVERSION FROM REPROOF marks a state of religious decline. The man cannot bear to have his state depicted, even in the pulpit. He calls the preaching, which searches and detects him, Arminian and legal. *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* Why should he quarrel with the truth? If that truth is delivered in its just proportions, his quarrel is with God!

STUPIDITY UNDER CHASTISEMENT proves a man to be under declension. He is not disposed to ask, *Wherefore dost thou contend with me?* He is *kicking against the pricks.* He is stricken, but has not grieved. He is chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke.

Such a man, too, has often a high mind. He is unhumbled—boasting—stout-hearted. He is ready to censure every one but himself.

UNNECESSARY OCCUPATION is another evidence of declension. Some men are unavoidably much engaged in the world. To such men God will give especial grace, if they seek it; and they shall maintain a spirit of devotion, even in the bustle and occupation of

their affairs. But some men *will be rich, and therefore fall into temptation and a snare:* they will have shops in a different part of the town: they say they do not feel this affect their religious state; but I cannot believe them: a man is declined from God before he enters on such schemes: a spiritual and devout man will generally find the business in which he is already engaged a sufficient snare.

In short, the symptoms may be this or that, but the disease is a dead palsy. *Ephraim! he hath mixed himself among the people: Ephraim is a cake not turned. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.*

On a Christian's associating with Irreligious Persons for their good.

CHRIST is an example to us of entering into mixed society. But our imitation of him herein must admit of restrictions. A feeble man must avoid danger. If any one could go into society as Christ did, then let him go: let him attend marriage-feasts and Pharisees' houses.

Much depends on a Christian's observing his call—the openings which Providence may make before him. It is not enough to say that he frequents public company in order to retard the progress of evil.

But, when in company of people of the world, we should treat them kindly and tenderly—with feeling and compassion. They should be assisted, if they are inclined to receive assistance. But if a Christian falls into the society of a mere worldling, it must be like the meeting of two persons in a rain—they will part as soon as possible. If a man loves such company, it is an evil symptom.

It is a Christian's duty to maintain a kind intercourse, if practicable, with his relatives. And he must DULY APPRECIATE THEIR STATE: if not religious, they cannot see and feel and taste his enjoyments: they accommodate themselves to him, and he accommodates himself to them. It is much a matter of accommodation on both sides.

AVOID DISGUSTING SUCH FRIENDS UNNECESSARILY. A precise man, for instance, must be humored. Your friends set down your religion, perhaps, as a case of humor.

CULTIVATE GOOD SENSE. If your friends perceive you weak in any part of your views and conduct, they will think you weak in your religion.

AVOID VAIN JANGLING. There is a disposition in such friends to avoid important and pinching truth. If you WILL converse with them on the subject of religion, they will often endeavor to draw you on to such points as predestination. They will ask you what you think of the salvation of infants and of the heathen. All this is meant to throw out the great question.

SEIZE FAVORABLE OCCASIONS—Not only the "*mollia tempora fandi*," but when public characters and public events furnish occasions of profitable reflection. Bring before your friends

THE EXTREME CHILDISHNESS OF A SINFUL STATE. Treat worldly amusements as puerile things. People of the world are sick at heart of their very pleasures.

On the Christian Sabbath.

It belongs to our very relation to God, to set apart a portion of our time for his service: but, as it might have been difficult for conscience to determine what that portion should be, God has prescribed it: and the ground of the observance remains the same, whether the remembrance of God's resting from his work, or any other reason, be assigned as the more immediate cause.

The Jewish Sabbath was partly of political institution, and partly of moral obligation. So far as it was a political appointment, designed to preserve the Jews distinct from other nations, it is abrogated: so far as it was of moral obligation, it remains in force.

Our Lord evidently designed to relax the strictness of the observance. Christianity is not a hedge placed round a peculiar people. A slave might enter into the spirit of Christianity, though obliged to work as a slave on the Sabbath: he might be *in the spirit on the Lord's day*, though in the mines of Patmos.

Difficulties often arise in respect to the observance of the Sabbath. I tell conscientious persons, "If you have the spirit of Christianity, and are in an employment contrary to Christianity, you will labor to escape from it, and God will open your way." If such a man's heart be right, he will not throw himself out of his employment the first day he suspects himself to be wrong, but he will pray and wait till his way shall be opened before him.

Christ came not to abolish the Sabbath, but to explain and enforce it, as he did the rest of the law. Its observance was nowhere positively enjoined by him, because Christianity was to be practicable, and was to go into all nations: and it goes thither stripped of its precise and various circumstances. *I was in the spirit on the Lord's day*, seems to be the soul of the Christian Sabbath.

In this view of the day, a thousand frivolous questions concerning its observance would be answered. "What can I do?" says one: I answer, "Do what true servants of God will do. Bend not to what is wrong. Be *in the spirit*. God will help you."

In short, we are going to spend a Sabbath in eternity. The Christian will acquire as much of the Sabbath spirit as he can. And, in proportion to a man's real piety in every age of the church, he will be found to have been a diligent observer of the Sabbath day.

On Judging justly.

A PERFECTLY just and sound mind is a rare and invaluable gift. But it is still much more unusual to see such a mind unbiased in all its actings. God has given this soundness of mind but to few; and a very small number of those few escape the bias of some predilection, perhaps habitually operating; and none

are at all times and perfectly free. I once saw this subject forcibly illustrated. A watchmaker told me that a gentleman had put an exquisite watch into his hands, that went irregularly. It was as perfect a piece of work as was ever made. He took it to pieces and put it together again twenty times. No manner of defect was to be discovered, and yet the watch went intolerably. At last it struck him, that, possibly, the balance-wheel might have been near a magnet. On applying a needle to it, he found his suspicions true. Here was all the mischief. The steel work in the other parts of the watch had a perpetual influence on its motions; and the watch went as well as possible with a new wheel. If the soundest mind be *magnetized* by any predilection, it must act irregularly.

PREJUDICE is often the result of such strong associations, that it acts involuntarily, in spite of conviction and resolution. The first step toward its eradication is the persevering habit of presenting it to the mind in its true colors.

If a man will look at most of his prejudices, he will find that they arise from his field of view being necessarily narrow like the eye of the fly. He can have but little better notions of the whole scheme of things, as has been well said, than a fly on the pavement of St. Paul's cathedral can have of the whole structure. He is offended, therefore, by inequalities which are lost in the grand design. This persuasion will fortify him against many injurious and troublesome prejudices.

Just judgment depends on the simplicity and the strength of the mind. The eye which conveys a perfect idea of the scene to the mind, must be unclouded and strong. If the mental eye be not single, the judgment will be warped by some little, mean, and selfish interests; and, if it be not capable of a wide and distant range, the decision will be partial and imperfect. For example: a man, with either of these failings, will be likely to blind his eyes from the conviction that would dart on him, when he places a son or a friend in any sphere of influence, *because* he is his son or his friend; when a single or a strong eye would show him that the interests of religion and truth required him to prefer some other person. The mind must be raised above the petty interests and affairs of life, and pursue supremely the glory of God and the church.

SOME minds are so diseased, that they can see an affair only in that light in which passion or predilection first presented it, or as it appears on the surface. The essence, the truth of the thing, which must give character to the whole, and on which all just decision must depend, may lie beneath the surface, and may be a nice affair. But such minds cannot enter into it. It is as though I should try to convince such persons—allowing me that the pineal gland is the seat of the soul—that, however fair and perfect the form, the man want-

ed the essence of his being, in wanting that apparently insignificant part of his body. Such men would say, "here is a striking and perfect form—all parts are harmonious—life animates the frame—the machine plays admirably—what has this little insignificant member to do with it?" And yet this is the essential and characterizing part of the man.

EVERY man has a peculiar turn of mind, which gives a coloring and tinge to his thoughts. I have particularly detected this in myself, with respect to public affairs. I have such an immediate view of God acting in them, that all the great men, who make such a noise and bustle on the scene, seem to me like so many mere puppets. God is moving them all, to effect his own designs. They cannot advance a step, whither he does not lead: nor stand a moment, where he does not place them. Now this is a view of things which it is my privilege to take as a Christian. But the evil lies here. I dwell so much on the view of the matter, to which the turn of my mind leads me, that I forget sometimes the natural tendencies of things. God uses all things, but not so as to destroy their natural tendencies. They are good or evil, according to their own nature; not according to the use which he makes of them.

THE mind has a constant tendency to conform itself to the sentiments and cast of thinking with which it is chiefly conversant, either among books or men. If the influence remain undetected, it grows soon into an inveterate habit of obliquity. Even if it be detected, it is the most difficult thing in the world to bring back the mind to the standard, especially if there be any thing in its constitution which assimilates itself to the error. I was once much in the habit of reading the mystical writers: a book of Dr. Owen's clearly convinced me that they erred: yet I found my mind ever inclining towards them, and winding round like the biased bowl. I saw clearly the absurdity of the notions in their view of them, and yet I was ever talking of "self-annihilation," &c., and am not even now rid of the thing.

On the Character of St. Paul.

I DELIGHT to contemplate St. Paul as an appointed pattern. Men might have questioned the propriety of urging on them the example of Christ—they might have said that we are necessarily in dissimilar circumstances. But St. Paul stands up in like case with ourselves—a model of ministerial virtues.

We consider him, perhaps, in point of character, more the immediate subject of extraordinary inspiration than he was in reality. And this mistake affects our view of him in two different ways.

We suppose, at one time, that his virtues were so much the effect of extraordinary communications, that he is no proper model for us; whereas he was no farther fitted to his cir-

cumstances than every Christian has warrant to expect to be, so far as his circumstances are singular.

At another time, perhaps, though we acknowledge and revere his distinguished character, yet our view of his virtues is exalted beyond due measure. We should remember, that, as he was fitted for his circumstances, so he was, in a great degree, made by them. Many men are, doubtless, executing their appointed task in retirement and silence, who would unfold a character beyond all expectation, if Providence were to lead them into a scene where the world rose up in arms, and they were sent forth into it under a clear conviction of an especial mission. The history of the church seems to show us that the effects of grace, ordinary or extraordinary, have been the same in all ages.

IN speaking of St. Paul, it has been usual to magnify his learning, among the many other great qualities which he possessed. That point seems never to have been satisfactorily made out. He was an educated Pharisee; but, farther than this, I think we cannot go. His quotations from the Greek poets are not evidences of even a schoolboy's learning in our day: for we forget, when we talk of them, that he was a Roman quoting Greek. Nor do I see any thing more in his famous speech in the Areopagus, so often produced as evidence on this subject, than the line of argument to which a strong and energetic mind would lead him. If we talk of his talents, indeed, he rises almost beyond admiration: but they were talents of a certain order; and the very display which we have of them seems a strong corroborative proof, that he is not to be considered as a profoundly learned man of his day. For instance, had he studied Aristotle, it would have been almost impossible but he must have caught some influence, which we should have seen in his writings. But there is nothing like the dry, logical, metaphysical character of that school, which yet had then given the law to the seats of science and philosophy. Instead of this, we see everywhere the copious, diffusive, declaiming, discursive, but sublime, and wise, and effective mind.

THERE is a true apostolicism in the character of St. Paul. It is a combination of ZEAL and LOVE.

The zeal of some men is of a haughty, unbending, ferocious character. They have the letter of truth, but they mount the pulpit like prize-fighters. It is with them a perpetual scold. This spirit is a reproach to the Gospel. It is not the spirit of Jesus Christ. He seems to have labored to win men.

But there is an opposite extreme. The love of some men is all milk and mildness! There is so much delicacy, and so much fastidiousness! They touch with such tenderness!—and if the patient shrinks, they will touch no more! The times are too flagrant for such a disposition. The Gospel is sometimes preached in this way, till all the people agree with

the preacher. He gives no offence, and he does no good!

But St. Paul united and blended love and zeal. He must win souls: but he will labor to do this by all possible lawful contrivances. *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* Zeal, alone, may degenerate into ferociousness and brutality; and love, alone, into fastidiousness and delicacy: but the apostle combined both qualities; and, more perfectly than other men, realized the union of the *fortiter in re* with the *suaviter in modo*.

Miscellanies.

THE Moravians seem to have very nearly hit on Christianity. They appear to have found out what sort of a thing it is—its quietness—meekness—patience—spirituality—heavenliness—and order. But they want fire. A very superior woman among them once said to me—that there wanted another body, the character of which should be combined from the Moravians and the Methodists. The Moravians have failed, in making too little of preaching; as the Methodists have done, in making too much of it.

THE grandest operations, both in nature and in grace, are the most silent and imperceptible. The shallow brook babbles in its passage, and is heard by every one: but the coming on of the seasons is silent and unseen. The storm rages and alarms; but its fury is soon exhausted, and its effects are partial and soon remedied: but the dew, though gentle and unheard, is immense in quantity, and the very life of large portions of the earth. And these are pictures of the operations of grace, in the church and in the soul.

ATHEISM is a characteristic of our day. On the sentiments, manners, pursuits, amusements, and dealings of the great body of mankind, there is written in broad characters—*without God in the world!*

I HAVE often had occasion to observe, that a warm blundering man does more for the world than a frigid wise man. A man, who gets into a habit of inquiring about proprieties and expediencies and occasions, often spends his life without doing any thing to purpose. The state of the world is such, and so much depends on action, that every thing seems to say loudly to every man, “Do something”—“do it”—“do it.”

PROVIDENCE is a greater mystery than religion. The state of the world is more humiliating to our reason, than the doctrines of the Gospel. A reflecting Christian sees more to excite his astonishment and to exercise his faith, in the state of things between Temple Bar and St. Paul's, than in what he reads from Genesis to Revelation. See the description of the working of God's Providence, in the account of the cherubims in the 1st and 10th chapters of Ezekiel.

THE scheme and machinery of redemption may be illustrated by the water-works at Marly. We consider a part of that complicated machinery, and we cannot calculate on the effects; but we see that they are produced. We cannot explain to a philosopher the system of redemption, and the mode of conducting and communicating its benefits to the human soul; but we know that it yields the water of life—civilization, to a barbarian—direction, to a wanderer—support, to those that are ready to perish.

IT is manifest that God designed to promote intercourse and commerce among men, by giving to each climate its appropriate productions. It is, in itself, not only innocent, but laudable. All trade, however, which is founded in embellishment, is founded in depravity. So also is that spirit of trade, which pushes men on dangerous competitions. Many tradesmen, professedly religious, seem to look on their trade as a vast engine, which will be worked to no good effect, if it be not worked with the whole vigor of the soul. This is an intoxicating and ruinous mistake. So far as they live under the power of religion, they will pursue their trade for sustenance and provision; but not even that, with unseasonable attention and with eagerness: much less will religion suffer them to bury themselves in it, when its objects are something beyond these; and, least of all, will it leave them to deceive themselves with certain commercial maxims, so far removed from simplicity and integrity, that I have been often shocked beyond measure at hearing them countenanced and adopted by some religious professors.

EVERY man should aim to do one thing well. If he dissipates his attention on several objects, he may have excellent talents intrusted to him, but they will be intrusted to no good end. Concentrated on his proper object, they might have a vast energy; but, dissipated on several, they will have none. Let other objects be pursued, indeed; but only so far as they may subserve the main purpose. By neglecting this rule, I have seen frivolity and futility written on minds of great power; and, by regarding it, I have seen very limited minds acting in the first rank of their profession—I have seen a large capital and a great stock dissipated, and the man reduced to beggary; and I have seen a small capital and stock improved to great riches.

To effect any purpose, in study, the mind must be concentrated. If any other subject plays on the fancy, than that which ought to be exclusively before it, the mind is divided; and both are neutralized, so as to lose their effect. Just as when I learnt two systems of short-hand. I was familiar with Gurney's method, and wrote it with ease; but, when I took it into my head to learn Byrom's, they destroyed each other, and I could write neither.

THERE should be something obvious, deter-

minate, and positive, in a man's reasons for taking a journey; especially if he be a minister. Such events and consequences may be connected with it in every step, that he ought in no case to be more simply dependant on the great Appointer of means and occasions. Several journeys which I have thought myself called on to take, I have since had reason to think I should not have taken. Negative, and even doubtful reasons, may justify him in choosing the safer side of staying at home; but there ought to be something more in the reasons which put him out of his way, to meet the unknown consequences of a voluntary change of station. Let there always be a "because" to meet the "why!"

I SOMETIMES see, as I sit in my pew at St. John's during the service, an idle fellow saunter into the chapel. He gapes about him for a few minutes: finds nothing to interest and arrest him, seems scarcely to understand what is going forward; and, after a lounge or two, goes out again. I look at him, and think, "Thou art a wonderful creature! A perfect miracle! What a machine is that body! curiously,—fearfully,—wonderfully framed. An intricate—delicate—but harmonious and perfect structure! And, then, to ascend to thy soul!—its nature!—its capacities—its actual state!—its designation!—its eternal condition!—I am lost in amazement!—While he seems to have no more consciousness of all this than the brutes which perish!"

SIN, pursued to its tendencies, would pull God from his throne. Though I have a deep conviction of its *exceeding sinfulness*, I live not a week without seeing some exhibition of its malignity which draws from me—"Well! who could have imagined this!" Sin would subjugate heaven, earth, and hell to itself. It would make the universe the minion of its lusts, and all beings bow down and worship.

IT is one of the most awful points of view in which we can consider God, that, as a righteous governor of the world, concerned to vindicate his own glory, he has laid himself under a kind of holy necessity to purify the unclean, or to sink him into perdition.

IT is one of the curses of error, that the man who is the subject of it, if he has had the opportunity of being better informed, cannot possibly do right, so far as he is under it. He has brought himself into an utter incapacity of acting virtuously; since it is vicious to obey an ill-informed conscience, if that conscience might have been better informed; and certainly vicious to disobey conscience, whether it be well or ill informed.

THE approaches of sin are like the conduct of Jael. It *brings butter in a lordly dish*. It bids high for the soul. But when it has fascinated and lulled the victim, the nail and the hammer are behind.

I HAVE met with one case in my ministry, very frequent and very distressing. A man says to me, "I approve all you say. I see things to be just as you state them. I see a necessity, a propriety, a beauty, in the religion of Christ. I see it to be interesting and important. But I do not *feel* it. I cannot feel it. I have no spirit of prayer. My heart belies my head: its affections refuse to follow my convictions." If this complaint be ingenuous, it is an evidence of grace; and I say, "Wait for God, and he will appear." But, too often, it is not ingenuous: the heart is actually indisposed: some tyrant holds it in bondage. The complaint is a mockery—because there is no sincerity of endeavor to obtain the object of which it pretends to lament the want—there is no sincere desire and prayer for the quickening and breathing of God's Holy Spirit on the torpid soul.

THE man who labors to *please his neighbor for his good to edification*, has the mind that was in Christ. It is a sinner trying to help a sinner. How different the face of things, if this spirit prevailed!—If Dissenters were like Henry, and Watts, and Doddridge: and churchmen like Leighton! The man who comes prominently forward in any way may expect to be found fault with: one will call him harsh, and another a trimmer. A hard man may be revered, but men will like him best at a distance: he is an iron man; he is not like Jesus Christ: Christ might have driven Thomas from his presence, for his unreasonable incredulity—but not so! It is as though he had said, "I will come down to thy weakness: if thou canst not believe without thrusting thy hand into my side, then thrust in thy hand." Even a feeble, but kind and tender man, will effect more than a genius, who is rough or artificial. There is danger, doubtless, of humoring others, and, against this, we must be on our guard. It is a kind and accommodating spirit at which we must aim. When the two goats met on the bridge, which was too narrow to allow them either to pass each other, or to return, the goat which lay down that the other might walk over him was a finer gentleman than Lord Chesterfield.

To expect disease wherever he goes, and to lay himself out in the application of remedies, is that habit of mind which is best suited to a Christian while he passes through the world, if he would be most effectually useful.

THE Papists and Puritans erred in opposite extremes, in their treatment of mankind. The PAPISTS, almost to a man, considered the mass of men as mere animals, and to be led by the senses. Even Fenelon fell into this way of thinking. Some few fine spirits were to be found, which were capable of other treatment: but the herd they thought capable of nothing but seeing and hearing. The PURITANS, on the contrary, treated man as though he had nothing of the animal about him. There was among them a total excision of all amuse-

ment and recreation. Every thing was effort. Every thing was severe. I have heard a man of this school preach on the distinction between justifying and saving faith. He tried to make his hearers enter into these niceties; whereas faith, in its bold and leading features, should have been presented to them, if any effect was expected. The bulk of mankind are capable of much more than the Papist allows, but are incapable of that which the Puritan supposes. They should be treated, in opposition to both, as rational and feeling creatures, but upon a bold and palpable ground.

I HAVE seen such sin in the church, that I have been often brought by it to a sickly state of mind. But, when I have turned to the world, I have seen sin working there in such measures and forms, that I have turned back again to the church, with more wisdom of mind and more affection to it—tainted as it is. I see sin, however, nowhere put on such an odious appearance as in the church. It mixes itself with the most holy things, and debases them, and turns them to its own purposes. It builds its nest in the very pinnacles of the temple. The history of the primitive ages of the church has also checked the disgust which would arise from seeing the impure state of things before our eyes. Folly and wickedness sported themselves even then in almost all possible forms. I turn, in such states of mind, to two portraits in my study—John Bradford and Aph. Leighton. These never fail, in such cases, to speak forcibly to my heart, that, in the midst of all, there is pure religion, and to tell me what that religion is.

THE joy of religion is an exorcist to the mind. It expels the demons of carnal mirth and madness.

THE union of Christians to Christ, their common head, and, by means of the influence which they derive from him, one to another, may be illustrated by the loadstone. It not only attracts the particles of iron to itself, by the magnetic virtue; but, by this virtue, it unites them one among another.

SOME considerable defect is always visible, in the greatest men, to a discerning eye. We idolize the best characters, because we see them partially. Let us acknowledge excellence, and ascribe the glory where it is due, while we honor the possessor: but let us remember that God has, by leaving his greatest servants to the natural operation of human frailty, in some point or other of their character, written on the face of the Christian Church, *Cease ye from man!* He does by perfection in character, as he did by the body of Moses—he hides it, that it may not be idolized. Our affections, our prejudices, or our ignorance, cover the creature with a dazzling veil: but he lifts it up; and seems to say, "see the creature you admire!"

A MAN, who thinks himself to have attained

Christian perfection, in the sense in which it has been insisted on by some persons, either deceives himself, by calling sin, infirmity—or Satan leaves him undisturbed in false security—or the demon of pride overcomes the demon of lust.

THE trials of the tempted Christian are often sent for the use of others, and are made the riches of all around him.

IF I were not penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the Bible, and the reality of my own experience, I should be confounded on all sides—from within, and from without—in the world, and in the church.

IF a good man cannot prevent evil, he will hang heavy on its wings, and retard its progress.

WE are too much disposed to look at the outside of things. The face of every affair chiefly affects us. Were God to draw aside the veil, and to show us but a little of the reality, and the relations of the most apparently mysterious and complicated dispensations, we should acquiesce with reverence and admiration. A minister, for example, may be taken away in the beginning of a promising career, or in the midst of great usefulness. If we cannot perceive any direct reason for this Providence, we stand amazed. But, if we could look forward into the farther life of such men, we should probably see that they were taken away in mercy to themselves—to the church—or to the world.

I HAVE seen too much of life, to have any thing to do in the troubled waters of my friends, by way of giving advice; unless they will allow me to remain in secret. This especially applies to some Christians of more sincerity than prudence. An opinion given on difficult and controverted cases, in confidence of its being used only as a private principle of action, has been quoted as authority in defence of the conduct founded on it.

MANY duties are involved on the very nature of religion, concerning which there is, perhaps, not one express precept to be found in the Scriptures. Private, family, or public devotions, are nowhere enjoined, as to the time, or frequency, or manner of performing them. Yet they are so strongly implied in the very nature of religion, and they are supposed so necessarily to flow from the divine principle of spiritual life in the soul, that those men greatly err, who think themselves not obliged by their religion to the most diligent use of them that circumstances will allow. And, surely, we may trace here the footsteps of divine wisdom. If it had been said, "Thou shalt do this or that, at such and such times," this would have brought a yoke on the neck of the Christian; and, even when absolutely unavoidable circumstances prevented him from complying with the injunction, would have

left sin on his conscience. While the way in which the duty is enforced leaves him a Christian liberty that is abundantly guarded against all licentiousness. He sees the duty implied and exemplified in a thousand instances throughout the Scripture. The same principle is applicable to certain pursuits, which occupy the men of the world; the general unlawfulness of which is fully implied, though they neither are nor could have been forbidden by name.*

Nothing seems important to me, but so far as it is connected with morals. The end—the *cui bono*?—enters into my view of every thing. Even the highest acts of the intellect become criminal trifling, when they occupy much of the time of a moral creature, and especially of a minister. If the mind cannot feel and treat mathematics, and music, and every thing else as a trifle, it has been seduced and enslaved. Brainerd, and Grimshaw, and Fletcher, were men. Most of us are dwarfs.

In imitating examples, there are two rules to be regarded: we must not stretch ours beyond our measure; nor must we despise that in another, which is unsuitable to ourselves.

A PIECE has been written to prove that the Gospel is preached to sinners only in the lowest state of misery and imbecility. Some men get hold of an opinion, and push it so far that it meets and contradicts other opinions, fairly deducible from Scripture. And it is no uncommon thing with them, to suppose that nobody else holds the same opinion; when, if they would look into the minds of other men, they would find themselves deceived. We preach the Gospel to sinners in the lowest condition; and the only reason I do not preach it to devils, is, that I find no Gospel provided for devils. As to the Roman Catholic notion of a grace of congruity, in their sense of it, I utterly disclaim it. Some of the best of them taught that God prepared the heart for himself in various unseen ways. And who can deny this? but this is far different from the notion, that some minds have a natural congruity or suitability to the Gospel. The fallow-ground of the heart may be broken up, ploughed, and prepared by unseen and most circuitous means. I have gone from hearing a man preach incomparable nonsense, who knew spiritual religion, to hearing a man of a carnal mind and habits, who knew nothing of spiritual religion, preach incomparable sense, and I thought the carnal preacher much most likely to call men to some feeling of religion.

The imagination is the grand organ where-

by truth can make successful approaches to the mind. Some preachers deal much with the passions: they attack the hopes and fears of men. But this is a very different thing from the right use of the imagination, as the medium of impressing truth. Jesus Christ has left perfect patterns of this way of managing men. But it is a distinct talent, and a talent committed to very few. It is an easy thing to move the passions; a rude, blunt, illiterate attack may do this. But, to form one new figure for the conveyance of truth to the mind, is a difficult thing. The world is under no small obligation to the man who forms such a figure. The French strain this point so far, that the effort is continually seen. To be effective, there must be about it a *naïveté*, an ease, a self-evidence. The figures of the French writers vanish from the mind, like the flourish of a musical band. The figures of Jesus Christ sink into the mind, and leave there the indelible impress of the truth which they convey.

The religious world has a great momentum. Money and power, in almost any quantity, are brought forth into action when any fair object is set before it. It is a pendulum, that swings with prodigious force. But it wants a regulator. If there is no regulating force on it of sufficient power, its motions will be so violent and eccentric, that it will tear the machine to pieces. And, therefore, when I have any influence in its designs and schemes, I cannot help watching them with extreme jealousy, to throw in every directing and regulating power which can be obtained from any quarter.

Nothing can be proposed so wild or so absurd, as not to find a party—and often a very large party—ready to espouse it. It is a sad reflection on human nature, but it is too true. Every day's experience and history confirm it. It would have argued gross ignorance of mankind to expect even Swedenborgianism to be rejected at once by the common sense of men. He, who laid the snare, knew that if a few characters of some learning and respectability could be brought to espouse it, there would be soon a silly multitude ready to follow.

The religious world has many features which are distressing to a holy man. He sees in it much proposal and ostentation, covering much surface. But Christianity is deep and substantial. A man is soon enlisted, but he is not soon made a soldier. He is easily put into the ranks, to make a show there; but he is not so easily brought to do the duties of the ranks. We are too much like an army of Asiatics; they count well, and cut a good figure; but when they come into action, one has no flint, another has no cartridge—the arms of one are rusty, and another has not learnt to handle them. This was not the complaint equally at all times. It belongs too peculiarly to the present day. The fault lies in the muster. We are like Falstaff. He took the king's money to press good men and true, but got together

* See this idea illustrated with regard to Articles of Faith in Jones's "Short view of the argument between the Church of England and Dissenters," in the "Scholar Armed." Vol. ii, p. 59. J. P.

such ragamuffins that he was ashamed to muster them. What is the consequence? People groan under their connexions. Respectable persons tell me such stories of their servants who profess religion, as to shame and distress me. High pretensions to spirituality! Warm zeal for certain sentiments! Priding themselves in Mr. Such-a-one's ministry! But what becomes of their duties? Oh these are "beggarly elements" indeed! Such persons are alive to religious TALK; but, if you speak to them on religious TEMPERs, the subject grows irksome.

ADMIRATION and feeling are very distinct from each other. Some music and oratory enchant and astonish, but they speak not to the heart. I have been overwhelmed by Handel's music: the Dettingen Te Deum is, perhaps, the greatest composition in the world: yet I never, in my life, heard Handel, but I could think of something else at the same time. There is a kind of music that will not allow this. Dr. Worgan has so touched the organ at St. John's, that I have been turning backward and forward over the Prayer Book for the first lesson in Isaiah, and wondered that I could not find Isaiah there! The musician and the orator fall short of the full power of their science, if the hearer is left in possession of himself.

THE Church of England is not fitted, in its present state, for a general church. Its secularity must be purged away. We shall hasten that day when Christians shall be of one heart and one mind, if we inculcate the spirit of charity in our respective circles. I have aimed much at this point, and shall push it farther. The rest must be left to Providence. He only can, by unknown means, heal the schisms of the church, and unite it together as one external body: and that this will be done as some think, by persecution, appears highly probable. I see no other means adequate to the end.

HYPOCRISY is folly. It is much easier, safer, and pleasanter, to be the thing which a man aims to appear, than to keep up the appearance of being what he is not. When a Christian is truly such, he acts from a nature—a new nature—and all the actings of that nature have the ease and pleasantness of nature in them.

HUMILIATION is the spirit of our dispensation—not a creeping, servile, canting humility, but an entire self-renunciation. The Mystics often talk admirably on the subject. Pride is the most universal and inveterate of all vices. Every man is a proud man, though all are not equally proud. No sin harasses the Christian so much, nor accompanies him so unweariedly. Its forms of exhibiting itself are infinitely varied, and none are more common than the affectation of humility. The assumption of the garb of humility, in all its shades, is generally but an expression of a proud mind. Pride is the master-sin of the spirit; and the

grace of God, in the whole tenor of our dispensation, is directed against it.

I EXTEND the circle of real religion very widely. Many men fear God, and love God, and have a sincere desire to serve him, whose views of religious truth are very imperfect, and in some points perhaps utterly false. But I doubt not that many such persons have a state of heart acceptable before God.

MAN is a creature of extremes. The middle path is generally the wise path; but there are few wise enough to find it. Because Papists have made too much of some things, Protestants have made too little of them. The Papists treat man as all sense; and, therefore, some Protestants would treat him as all spirit. Because one party has exalted the Virgin Mary to a divinity, the other can scarcely think of that *most highly favored among women* with common respect. The Papist puts the Apocrypha into his canon—the Protestant will scarcely regard it as an ancient record. The Popish heresy of human merit in justification, drove Luther on the other side into most unwarrantable and unscriptural statements of that doctrine. The Papists consider grace as inseparable from the participation of the sacraments—the Protestants too often lose sight of them as instituted means of conveying grace.

THE language of irreligion in the heart, is, "give—give—now—now—whatever the flesh and the eye lust after, and whatever gratifies the pride of life. Give it now—for, as to any reversion, I will not sacrifice a single lust for it; or, if I must have a religion, it shall be any thing rather than that demeaning system which makes every thing a mere boon."

INSTEAD of attempting any logical and metaphysical explanation of JUSTIFICATION by the imputed righteousness of Christ, all which attempts have human infirmity stamped upon them, I would look at the subject in the great and impressive light in which Scripture places it before me. It teaches me to regard the intervention of Christ for me as the sole ground of all expectation toward God. In consideration of his sufferings, my guilt is remitted, and I am restored to that which I had lost by sin. Let us add to this, that the sufferings of Christ were in our stead, and we shall see the point of view in which Scripture sets him forth as the deserver and procurer to us of all pardon and grace. The thing is declared—not explained. Let us not, therefore, darken a subject which is held forth in a prominent light, by our idle endeavors to make it better understood.

REGENERATION and CONVERSION may be distinguished from each other, though they cannot be separated. They may be distinguished; as a man's being disposed to go in a certain road, and his actually going in that road, may be distinguished: for regeneration is God's dispos-

ing the heart to himself, but conversion is the actual turning of the heart to God.

THERE is an immeasurable distance between the genuine and the spurious Christian. The genuine Christian may be weak, wild, eccentric, fanatical, faulty; but he is right-hearted: you find *the root of the matter* in him. The spurious Christian is the most dangerous of men, and one of the most difficult to deal with. You see what he is, but you find it almost impossible to keep clear of him. He will seek your acquaintance, in order to authenticate his own character—to indorse his own reputation. But avoid him. His errors and vices will be assigned to the church by an indiscriminating world. There is less danger in associating with worldly people by profession, and more tenderness to be exercised toward them. St. Paul teaches us the distinction; 1 Cor. v, 9–11.

I FEEL disposed to treat carnal men and carnal ministers with tenderness, not to show them that I am a spiritually proud man. Let them see that you have some secret in possession which keeps you quiet, humble, patient, holy, meek, and affectionate, in a turbulent and passionate world.

THE character of Balaam is not uncommon in the church. I have been amazed to see religious professors, whose ungodly character has been known and read of all men, who have nevertheless entertained a good opinion of themselves. I have accounted for it by supposing that they build entirely on the distinction of their views of truth from those of other men. They “know the points: they see the distinctions: and, moreover, they approve what they know, and desire to die the death of the righteous and be where they are—and, certainly, they must be the men of God’s council, and the men who stand on his side against the world!”

I HAVE long adopted an expedient, which I have found of singular service. I have a shelf in my study for tried authors, and one in my mind for tried principles and characters.

When an AUTHOR has stood a thorough examination, and will bear to be taken as a guide, I put him on the shelf!

When I have more fully made up my mind on a PRINCIPLE, I put it on the shelf! A hundred subtle objections may be brought against this principle: I may meet with some of them, perhaps; but my principle is on the shelf! Generally, I may be able to recall the reasons which weighed with me to put it there: but if not, I am not to be sent out to sea again. Time was, when I saw through and detected all the subtleties that could be brought against it. I have past evidence of having been fully convinced, and there on the shelf it shall lie!

When I have turned a CHARACTER over and over on all sides, and seen it through and through in all situations, I put it on the shelf. There may be conduct in the person which may stumble others: there may be great in-

consistencies: there may be strange and unaccountable turns—but I have put that character on the shelf: difficulties will all be cleared up: every thing will come round again. I should be much chagrined, indeed, to be obliged to take a character down which I had once put up, but that has never been the case with me yet; and the best guard against it is, not to be too hasty in putting them there.

INFLUENCE, whether derived from money, talents, or connexions, is power: there is no person so insignificant but he has much of this power: the little Israelite maid, in Naaman’s family, is an instance. Some, indeed, suppose that they have more power than they really have; but we generally think we have less than we in reality have. Whoever neglects or misapplies this power, is an unprofitable servant; unbelief, timidity, and delicacy, often cramp its exertion; but it is our duty to call ourselves out to the exertion of this power, as Mordecai called out Esther, (chap. iv): it is our duty to watch against every thing that might hinder or pervert our influence: for mere regard to reputation will often carry many into error: who would not follow Aaron in worshipping the golden calf? Even men of feeble public talents may acquire much influence by kindness and consistency of character: ministers are defective in resting their personal influence too much on their public ministry: time will give weight to a man’s character; and it is one advantage to a man to be cast early into his situation, that he may earn a character.

THE instances of ARTIFICE which occur in Scripture, are not to be imitated, but avoided: if Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob equivocate, in order to obtain their ends, this is no warrant to me to do so. David’s falsehood concerning Goliath’s sword argued distrust of God. If any part of the truth which I am bound to communicate be concealed, this is sinful artifice: the Jesuits in China, in order to remove the offence of the cross, declared that it was a falsehood invented by the Jews that Christ was crucified; but they were expelled from the empire: and this was designed, perhaps, to be held up as a warning to all missionaries, that no good end is to be carried by artifice.

BUT ADDRESS is of a different nature. There is no falsehood, deception, or equivocation in address. St. Paul, for instance, employed lawful address, and not artifice, when he set the Sadducees and Pharisees at variance: he employed a lawful argument to interest the Pharisees in his favor: this was great address, but it had nothing of criminal artifice. In Joshua’s ambushes for the men of Ai, there was nothing sinful: it was a lawful stratagem of war: it would have been unlawful to tell the men of Ai there was no ambush: but they knew that they came out of their city liable to such ambushes. Christ’s conduct at Emmaus, and that of the angels of Sodom, were meant as trials of the regard of those with whom they were conversing.

PRECIPITATION is acting without sufficient grounds of action. Youth is the peculiar season of precipitation: the young man's motto is "onward!" There is no such effectual cure of this evil as experience: when a man is made to feel the effects of his precipitation, both in body and mind: and God alone can thus bring a man acquainted with himself. There is a self-blindness in precipitation: a precipitate man is, at the time, a blind man: *That be far from thee!* said St. Peter: *this shall not happen to thee.* *As the Lord liveth,* said David, *the man that hath done this thing shall surely die!*

There is great criminality in precipitation. A man under its influence is continually tempted to take God's work out of his hands. It is not a state of dependance. It betrays want of patience with respect to God: and want of faith: *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.* It discovers a want of charity: in a rash moment, we may do an injury to our neighbor which we can never repair.

There are few who do not feel that they are suffering through life the effects of their own precipitation. *He, then, that trusteth his own heart, is a fool.* In precipitate moments, we should learn to say, "I am not now the man to give an opinion, or to take a single step!"

METHOD, as Mrs. More says, is the very hinge of business: and there is no method without PUNCTUALITY. Punctuality is important, because it subverts the peace and good temper of a family: the want of it not only infringes on necessary duty, but sometimes excludes this duty. Punctuality is important, as it gains time: it is like packing things in a box: a good packer will get in half as much more as a bad one. The calmness of mind which it produces is another advantage of punctuality: a disorderly man is always in a hurry: he has no time to speak with you, because he is going elsewhere; and when he gets there, he is too late for his business, or he must hurry away to another before he can finish it. It was a wise maxim of the Duke of Newcastle—"I do one thing at a time." Punctuality gives weight to character. Such a man has made an appointment: then I know he will keep it. And this generates punctuality in you: for, like other virtues, it propagates itself: servants and children must be punctual, where their leader is so. Appointments, indeed, become debts: I owe you punctuality, if I have made an appointment with you; and have no right to throw away your time, if I do my own.

It is a difficult question in casuistry—How FAR A MAN IS BOUND TO BETRAY CONFIDENCE FOR GENERAL GOOD. Let it be considered what consequences would follow from a man's disclosing all the evil he knows. The world would become a nest of scorpions. He must often mistake, and of course calumniate. Such is his incapacity to determine what is really evil in his neighbor, and such are the mischiefs frequently arising from the disclosure of even what should be in truth evil, that he seems rather called on to be silent, till circumstances

render it a case of duty to remain silent no longer. But if this be his GENERAL RULE, it will be his duty to observe silence much oftener in cases of CONFIDENCE. Professional men—a minister—a lawyer—a medical man—have an official secrecy imposed on them. If this were not the case, a distressed conscience could never unburden itself to its confessor. Incalculable injuries to health and property must be sustained for want of proper advisers. This applies in a very high sense to a minister, considered as a confessor—a director of the conscience. An alarmed conscience will unfold its most interior recesses before him. It is said Dr. Owen advised a man, who, under religious convictions, confessed to him a murder which he had perpetrated some years before, to surrender himself up to justice. The man did so, and was executed. I think Dr. Owen erred in his advice. I thought myself right, in urging on persons, who have opened their hearts to me, deep humiliation before God for crimes committed in an unconverted state: but, as it had pleased Him to give a thorough hatred of those crimes to the mind, and a consequent self-loathing and humiliation, and yet to allow in his providence that they should have remained undiscovered, I judged that the matter might be safely left with him. Yet there may be cases in which general consequences require that confidence should be betrayed. Such cases usually relate to EVIL IN PROGRESS. To prevent or counteract such evil, it may be necessary to disclose what has been intrusted in confidence. Yet the party should be honestly warned, if its purposes are not changed, what duty your conscience will require.

I HAVE felt twice in my life very extraordinary impressions after sermons, and that from men least calculated to affect me. A man of great powers, but so dissipated on every thing that he knew nothing—a frivolous, futile babbler, whom I was ready almost to despise—surprised and chained me so, in my own church at Lewes, that I was thunderstruck: I think it was concerning the dove not finding rest for the sole of her foot: he felt the subject strongly himself; and in spite of all my prejudices against him and my real knowledge of his character, he made me feel it as I have scarcely ever done before or since. In the other instance, I had to do with a very different character: he was a simple, but weak man: it pleased God, however, to shoot an arrow by his hand into my heart: I had been some time in a dry, fruitless frame, and was persuading myself that all was going on well: he said one day, at Lewes, with an indescribable simplicity, that "men might cheer themselves in the morning, and they might pass on tolerably well perhaps without God at noon; but the cool of the day was coming, when God would come down to talk with them." It was a message from God to me: I felt as though God had descended into the church, and was about to call me to my account! In the former instance, I was more surprised and as-

tonished than affected religiously; but, in this, I was unpeckably moved.

CONSTITUTIONAL bias is a suspicious interpreter of PROVIDENTIAL LEADINGS. A man's besetting sin lies in that to which his nature is most inclined; and, therefore, to walk wisely and holily, he should be very jealous of such supposed leadings in Providence as draw with his constitutional propensity. He is never safe, unless he is in the act of collaring his nature as a rebel, and forcing it into submission. A *sanguine* man sees a sign and token in every thing: in every ordinary occurrence, his imagination hears a call: his pious fancy is the source and food of an eager, disquieted, and restless habit of mind. An *enterprising* man has great facility in finding God in whatever seems to open to honor, or influence, or power. But he has lost the right estimate of things: if God seem to draw with an enterprising mind, the man should stand and tremble. Providence may really lead some retired and humble men into situations which the ambitious man would covet: but, even in that case, it is not to be regarded as an evidence of favor, so much as an increase of trial and responsibility: but he can never open before an enterprising and ambitious character, unless in judgment, or in such imminence of trial as should call the man to self-suspicion and humility. A *pleasurable* man easily discerns God's hand in every thing, which seems to put his favorite indulgences within his power: such a thing was a great providence! and he is vastly grateful! while he sees not that he is led away to broken cisterns. An *idle* man has a constant tendency to torpidity. He has adopted the Indian maxim—that it is better to walk than to run, and better to stand than to walk, and better to sit than to stand, and better to lie than to sit. He hugs himself into the notion, that God calls him to be quiet:—that he is not made for bustling and noise!—that such and such a thing plainly show him he ought to retire and sit still! A *busy* man is never at rest: he sees himself called so often into action, that he digs too much to suffer any thing to grow, and waters so profusely that he drowns. The danger in all these cases is, lest a man should bless himself in his SNARES!

ADAM well observes:—"A poor country parson, fighting against the devil in his parish,

has nobler ideas than Alexander had." Men of the world know nothing of true glory: they know nothing of the grandeur of that sentiment—*Thou, O God, art the thing that I long for!* You may, perhaps, find this sentiment in the corner of some monastery, where a poor ignorant creature is mumbling over his prayers: or, it may even be found to exist with the nonsense and fanaticism of a Swedenborgian; but, wherever it is, it is true dignity.

Look at the bravery of the world! Go into the Park. Who is the object of admiration there? The captain swelling and strutting at the head of his corps! And what is there at the court?—"Make way! Make way!" And who is this? A bit of clay, with a riband tied round it! Now it makes nothing against the comparative emptiness and littleness of these things, that I or any man should be ensnared by them, and play the fool with the rest of the species. Truth is truth, and dignity is dignity, in spite of the errors and folly of any man living.

But this is the outside. What are the greatest minds, and the noblest projects of the world, compared with a Christian! Take Mr. Pitt for an instance: and contrast him with the most insignificant old woman in the church of Christ! If the Bible be not true, you have no standard: all your reasonings, and science, and philosophy, and metaphysics, are gross absurdity and folly. But if the Bible be true; Mr. Pitt, great and noble as he is, yet, considered as a mere politician, even Mr. Pitt has a little, contracted, mean mind!—a driveller!—an earth-worm! Compared with his projects and schemes, the old woman, who rises at two o'clock in the morning, lights her farthing candle, stands all day over her wash-tub, at night puts on her red cloak, steals out to some place of worship, hears the truths of the Gospel mangled perhaps with ignorant, yet honest zeal, but draws in good into an honest and prepared heart—why, this woman is a heroine—a noble mind—compared with the greatest of men, considered as a mere man of this world!

Bishop Wilkins has said admirably, That nothing in man is great, but so far as it is connected with God. The only wise thing recorded of Xerxes, is his reflection on the sight of his army—That not one of that immense multitude would survive a hundred years: it seems to have been a momentary gleam of true light and feeling.

APPENDIX.

REMARKS BY MR. CECIL, COMMUNICATED TO THE EDITOR BY SOME FRIENDS.

A HIDING-PLACE implies secrecy. He who can say unto God, *Thou art my hiding place*, may go abroad about his affairs, and may pass through a thousand dangers, and yet at the same time, have such a hiding place, in the favor and protection of God, that, when he seems to be exposed on every side, still he is secured and hidden from every evil.

A GREAT man, however high his office and talents, is dependent on little things. *Jonah was exceeding glad of his gourd*. However splendid and towering, man is crushed beneath the moth, if God does not uphold him: so that while we are admiring the great man as he is called, and however he may be disposed to admire himself and to speak great swelling words of vanity, facts will show that he is a poor, dependent creature, who cannot live a moment without God. If the Holy Spirit opens his eyes, he will perceive that he cannot stand alone; but can only support himself and climb, like the ivy, by clasping one stronger than himself.

DREAMS are common to sleeping. No man begins to slumber in religion, but he falls into some golden dream. It is a device of Satan to seduce men into a drowsy state, and then to beguile them with some dream. When the duties of religion become irksome, then he presents some novelty which allures and deceives us: whereas, had we been in life and vigor, we should have detected the deceit.

THERE are no greater objects of pity in the world, than men who are admired by all around for their nice discernment and fine taste in every thing of a worldly nature, but have no taste for the riches that endure for ever—no love for God or his word—no love for Christ or their souls. In such a state, however admired or respected, they cannot see the kingdom of God.

A SPIRITUAL man is a character that rises far above all worldly wisdom and science. He is described by our Lord as *born of the Spirit*. Spiritual senses are given to him. He has a spiritual TASTE that rejects whatever is injurious, and gladly receives whatever is salutary to the spiritual life: he desires the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby. He has a spiritual SIGHT: he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. He SMELLS a sweet savor in the things of God. *His name is as oint-*

ment poured forth. He has a quick FEELING. And he has a spiritual EAR: *My sheep hear my voice*. He lives in a world of his own: he is tried by spiritual conflicts, and supported by spiritual comforts. If the things of God do not afford him consolation, he droops, and nothing in this world can lift up his head: he will say to every other object, *Miserable comforters are ye all*. He is pursuing a spiritual end, and while others boast and are puffed up with their great attainments, he is humbled in the dust, and gives all glory to God.

THERE are critical circumstances, under which a man who is in general on his guard, is called to redouble his Christian vigilance. If he is about to encounter imminent danger, for instance, he will take care to secure himself by every possible means. A house may be well guarded and secured, but, if there is any fear and expectation of thieves, every place will be doubly barred and watched. Good care may be taken, in the general habits of a family, to guard against fire; but if it be known that a spark has fallen among any combustibles, every possible search is made to discover it and to prevent its ravages. Thus should every servant of Christ redouble his guard in critical circumstances. He should remember, that, while awful providences seem to be threatening us, and while we are surrounded with dangers on every side, and while the enemy of our souls is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, it ill becomes us to trifle. Let us stir up ourselves, and attend to our Master's admonition, *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord*.

IF St. Paul had not been an entire character, he would not have spoken so ingeniously of himself as he does in the 7th to the Romans. He would have acted as many others have done: he would have put the best aspect on things. He would not have opened the chambers of imagery; and have showed, while all the church was admiring him, what was passing within. Here were real simplicity and humility—nothing of that Pharisee which he once was. The Pharisee is become a Publican: the reality is coming forward; and he seems to say, "Is any man groaning under a body of sin and death?—on searching his heart, does he find that therein dwelleth no good thing?—This is my case also; and if I have any thing wherein to glory, it is in Christ and not in myself."

CHARITY should teach us to exercise hope and love toward all men—hope toward those who are without, and love toward those who are within, the walls of the city of God. Of those without, we are apt to despair too soon, and to say, *There is no hope*; when we should labor to allure them into the church of God, and to impress them with a sense of its glory and its privileges. Toward those within the walls, we sometimes fail in the exercise of love: we are too much influenced in our feelings toward them by a difference of education, taste, or disposition; while the great question ought to be, “Are they really *fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God*?”—and, if so, whatever their defects may be, we ought to honor and love them as the *temples of the Holy Ghost*.

WHEN Christians are delivered from trouble, they are apt soon to forget it: and to lose sight of the holy resolutions formed while under affliction—the strong impressions soon decay. Whereas if we were enabled to *glory in tribulations*—if our conscience were made tender—if more reality were put into our prayers—we should take heed how we give way to an evil heart of unbelief: we should remember, too, how our troubles were brought on us, and the benefits which we received while they continued: we should watch that we might not estimate them falsely: and at all times, we should bear it in our mind, that it is not suffering which hurts us, but sin.

SOME men will follow Christ on certain conditions—if he will not lead them through rough roads—if he will not enjoin them any painful tasks—if the sun and wind do not annoy them—if he will remit a part of his plan and order. But the true Christian, who has the spirit of Jesus, will say, as Ruth said to Naomi, “*Whither thou goest, I will go!*” whatever difficulties and dangers may be in the way.

It is our happiness, as Christians, that, however we may change our place, we shall never change our object. Whatever we lose, we shall not lose that which we esteem *better than life*. God has made to us this gracious promise—*I will dwell in them, and walk in them*. And though we may endure much affliction, and pass through many deep waters, yet this is our honor and comfort, THE LORD IS WITH US! and then—what is difficulty?—what is tribulation?—what is death?—Death to a Christian is but an entrance into the city of God! it is but joining a more blessed company, and singing in a more exalted strain, than he can do in this world.

THE way of every man is declarative of the END of that man.

How difficult it is to show those who are in the house of mourning, that God is teaching them, that, if they had not leaned so much on their

creature-supports, they had not been so broken! Still they are crying, *O Absalom, my son, my son!* Why is it that we are shocked to see the world falling to pieces around us, when we shall leave it ourselves to-morrow—perhaps to-day? We forget that it is the design of God to dash every thing to pieces. It is by these trials that we begin to learn we have been walking by sense rather than by faith—and looking at our children and our possessions as though we were never to lose them.

It is by FAITH that we are relieved under the difficulties of SENSE. Sense revolts, when it views our great High-Priest on the cross—Faith glories in this object! Sense talks like the Jews: *He saved others: himself he cannot save: if he be now the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him*. Faith lays hold on him as the Saviour of the world, and cries, *Lord! remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!* Sense envies the prosperous worldling, and calls him happy—Faith goes into the sanctuary, to see what his end will be. When the waves run high, Sense clamors—Faith says, “Speak but the word, and the wind and waves shall obey thee.” When we feel our *earthly house of this tabernacle* taking down, Sense sinks—but Faith says, *We know, that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*.

WISDOM prepares for the worst: but folly leaves the worst for that day when it comes.

ABRAHAM teaches us the right way of conversing with God:—*And Abraham fell on his face, and God talked with him!* When we plead with him our faces should be in the dust: we shall not then speak lightly of him, nor complain; nor will there be any more boasting. We shall abase ourselves and exalt God!

THE Christian's secret intercourse with God will make itself manifest to the world. We may not see the husbandman cast the seed into the ground, yet when the corn grows and ripens we know that it was sown. The mere professor, who may be found every where but in his secret chamber, may think that with care he shall pass for a good Christian: but he mistakes, for the spirit WILL discover itself, of what sort it is. He, who would walk safely and honorably, must walk closely with God in secret.

A VARIETY of circumstances render the sinner's first approaches to Christ difficult. They who find an EASY access, will find an easy departure when troubles arise.

THE most likely method we can take to hasten the removal of what we love, is, to value it too

much—to think on it with endless anxiety—to live on its favor with solicitude. It shall soon either become a thorn in our side, or be taken away.

Be ye not unequally yoked. If a believer marries an unbeliever, the miseries which ensue are endless. Were they determined, in kindness, to grant all they could to each other; yet they live as in two separate worlds. There is a great gulf between them, which cannot be passed without the grace of God; on which, while all should hope and pray for it, none should presume. They cannot taste the same pleasures, nor share the same sorrows, nor pursue the same objects, nor walk in the same path. What hope, then, can there be of comfort? Every Christian finds the corruptions of his own heart, the snares of the world, and the devices of Satan, together with innumerable secret anxieties, quite enough to struggle with in his journey to heaven, without adding another to his difficulties.

In studying the word of God, digest it under these two heads; either as removing obstructions, which keep God and thee asunder; or as supplying some uniting power to bring God and thee together.

PERHAPS it is a greater energy of Divine Power, which keeps the Christian from day to day, from year to year—praying, hoping, running, believing—against all hinderances—which maintains him as a LIVING martyr—than that which bears him up for an hour in sacrificing himself at the stake.

By the course of his providence God will assert the liberty of his council.

LET me ask, every day, what reference it has to the day of judgment; and cultivate a disposition to be reminded of that day.

INDULGE not a gloomy contempt of any thing which is in itself good: only let it keep its place.

GOD has called us to meet his best gift to man—his only-begotten Son—not in a splendid court, but in a manger!—in the wilderness!—in Gethsemane!—before the high-priest, when they spat in his face and buffeted him, and smote him!—at the cross!—and at the sepulchre! Thus it is that he corrects the pride and ambition of the human heart!

THERE is in sin, not only an infinite mischief done to the man, but it is accompanied by an infatuation that surpasses all description. When the heart declines from God, and loses communion with Christ, the man resembles one in a consumption, who is on the brink of the grave and yet

talks of a speedy recovery! A death will come on the spirit, which will be perceived and felt by all around: yet when the most affectionate friends of such a man attempt to expostulate, they often find him not only insensible, but obstinate and stout-hearted. He who, like Samson, the champion of Israel, lays his head in the lap of temptation, will rarely rise again as he lay down: he may say, *I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself:* but he wists not that the Lord is departed from him!—*Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not!*

THE whole life of Christ was one continued expression of the same desire.—“Let me lay aside my glory—let me expire on the cross—so that thy kingdom may come!” And the blood of every martyr, who ever suffered in the cause of God, cried, “Let thy kingdom come!”

GROWTH in grace manifests itself by a simplicity—that is, a greater naturalness of character. There will be more usefulness, and less noise; more tenderness of conscience, and less scrupulosity: there will be more peace, more humility: when the full corn is in the ear, it bends down because it is full.

THE history of all the great characters of the Bible is summed up in this one sentence:—they acquainted themselves with God, and acquiesced in his will in all things.

GOD’S way of answering the Christian’s prayer for an increase of patience, experience, hope, and love—usually is to put him into the furnace of tribulation. St. James therefore says, *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* People of the world count it all joy when they are in ease and affluence; but a Christian is taught to count it all joy when he is tried as gold in the fire.

IN Christ we see the most perfect exhibition of every grace, to which we, as his followers, are called. Let there be but in us that poverty of spirit—that disposition to bear with provocations, and to forgive injuries—that obedience to God and acquiescence in his will—that perseverance in doing good—that love which overcometh all difficulties—that meekness, humility, patience, compassion, and gentleness which were found in Christ; and if any man should be so ignorant and debased as to imagine that this is not TRUE DIGNITY OF CHARACTER, let it be remembered, that this was the mind which was also in Christ Jesus.

LOOKING back is more than we can sustain without going back!

WHEN the multitudes followed our Lord on a particular occasion, although he wished for retirement, and had gone purposely to seek it, yet he gave up his design and attended to them. Mark

the condescension and tenderness of such conduct, in opposition to a sour, monastic, morose temper. We are too fond of our own will. We want to be doing what we fancy mighty things; but the great point is, to do small things, when called to them, in a right spirit.

THE world will allow of a vehemence approaching to ecstasy, on almost any occasion but that, which, above all others, will justify it.

A CHRISTIAN will find his parenthesis for prayer, even through his busiest hours.

WE treat sensible and present things as realities, and future and eternal things as fables: whereas the reverse should be our habit.

AN Enthusiast will court trouble, and that for ITSELF: but a Christian, while he does not COURT it, yet rejoices in it: not for its own sake, but because he knows that *tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed.* While *patience* is the fruit of his conflicts and trials, he gains *experience* by them: he acquires the knowledge which a traveller obtains in performing a long journey: he is in possession of a bundle of choice maxims and observations, gathered with much pains: he is taught by them to know his own heart: he is brought acquainted with the faithfulness and mercy of God, in holding him up in the deep waters, and accompanying him through the fire of affliction. And this experience produces *hope*—a hope that he is savingly united to Christ—a hope that he is in the church of God—a *hope of the glory of God*—a hope that *maketh not ashamed*, keeping us steady at anchor through every storm, and when every other support fails.

THERE are but two states in the world which may be pronounced happy—either that of the man who rejoices in the light of God's countenance, or that of him who mourns after it.

LET the warm-hearted Christian be careful of receiving a wrong bias in religion. When a ball is in motion, almost any thing presented to it obliquely will turn it wholly out of its course. Beware, therefore, of a wrong direction in Christianity. Fix your attention ever on such examples as St. John and St. Paul, and hear how they speak: *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha!*

God denies a Christian nothing, but with a design to give him something better.

God teaches some of his best lessons in the school of affliction. It is said that St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians has quite the spirit and air of a prison. That school must be truly ex-

cellent, which produces such experience and wisdom.

WE cannot build too confidently on the merits of Christ, as our only hope; nor can we think too much of the *mind that was in Christ*, as our great example.

A CHRISTIAN does not *glory in tribulation*, as he does in the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ is the OBJECT in which he glories: but he glories in tribulation as an appointed MEANS and INSTRUMENT in the hand of God, of accomplishing his own pleasure and promoting our real good.

NEVER was there a man of deep piety, who has not been brought into extremities—who has not been put into the fire—who has not been taught to say, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!*

A CHRISTIAN's steps are not only safe, but steady:—*He that believeth shall not make haste.* When DANGER approaches, he shall not be thrown into confusion from his alarm, so as to be ready to say, "Whither shall I run?" but, finding himself on safe ground, he shall be quiet. Being built on the sure foundation and *established in Christ*, he shall not make haste in his EXPECTATIONS: he shall not make haste with respect to the promises, as though they were long in their accomplishment, knowing that *all the promises of God are Yea, and, in Christ, Amen!* In AFFLICTION, he shall not make haste in running to broken cisterns; as Asa did, when in his disease, *he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians*: he shall not be alarmed, or driven about, as one who has not a strong hold to enter; but shall say, *None of these things move me! neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy!* With respect to his CHARACTER, the Christian shall not make haste: if a cloud come over his reputation, and men will suspect his integrity without grounds, he will commit himself to God, and wait his opportunity, and not make rash haste to justify and clear his character.

WHEN a man can say, "My God!" if he can add no more, that is sufficient: for my God is all-wise in appointing, and almighty to uphold and to deliver. My God is a Father to me in Christ: yea, he is a Father who hid his face from Christ for my good. If, then, I am in darkness, let me remember that God never had a Son that was not sometimes in the dark; for even Christ, his only begotten Son, cried out, *My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?*

Few Christians, if any, sufficiently honor Christ, as governing their concerns. They do not say, "Now, while I am praying on earth, my Saviour is working for me in Heaven. He is saying to one, 'Do this!'—and to another, 'Do that!'—and all for my good!" While Jeremiah was, doubtless,

crying to God out of the dungeon, Ebed-melech was interceding for him with the king, and they were preparing the means of his deliverance. See Jer. xxxviii.

LET the restless, comfortless state of a backslider, distinguish him from an apostate.

If you have set out in the ways of God, do not stumble at present difficulties. Go forward. Look not behind.

SOMETHING must be left as a test of the loyalty of the heart—in Paradise, the Tree: in Israel, a Canaanite: in us, Temptation.

RELIGIOUS joy, is a holy, a delicate deposit. It is a pledge of something greater, and must not be thought lightly of: for let it be withdrawn only for a little, and, notwithstanding the experience we may have had of it, we shall find no living creature can restore it to us, and we can only, with David, cry, *Restore unto me, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation.*

A CHRISTIAN should beware of that temptation, *Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?* He should remember, if it is a time of extremity, that is the very reason why he should wait. If his way is so hedged up that he cannot go forward, he should say, "Now is the time for me to stand still, and wait till God opens my way." *When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path.*

HUMAN nature is always putting forth its fears and unbelief, in anxious questions concerning tomorrow, or some threatening calamity: but Christ says to every Christian, "*Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid: I go to prepare a place for you; and I will protect and guide you throughout the journey thither.*"

God with us is the traveller's security. Jacob was destitute: he had a long and dreary journey; but God said, *Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.*

God calls not for thousands of rams nor ten thousands of rivers of oil: he calls not his creatures to live in sackcloth and ashes, nor sets them to perform long pilgrimages, nor to inflict pains on their bodies. No! the rigors of superstition are from MAN. The voice of God is, "Be happy, here and for ever! Fly that which will make you miserable every where! *Come unto me all that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"

THE voice of Christ is, *My Son, give me thy heart!* and to him, who obeys, he will say, "Go in peace! go into the grave! go to judgment! go into eternity! go in peace!"

A CHRISTIAN must stand in a posture to receive every message which God shall send. He must be so prepared, as to be like one who is called to set off on a sudden journey, and has nothing to do but to set out at a moment's notice: or like a merchant who has goods to send abroad, and has them all packed up and in readiness, for the first sail.

How many people go out of their sphere under good pretences!

A PERSON who objects to tell a friend of his faults, because he has faults of his own, acts as a surgeon would who should refuse to dress another person's wound because he had a dangerous one himself.

WHEN the most insignificant person tells us we are wrong, we ought to listen. Let us believe it possible we may be wrong, when any one supposes we are; and enter into the true littleness which consists in receiving correction like a child.

No man rejects a minister of God who faithfully performs his office, till he has rejected God.

THE plainest declarations of God's favor and the strongest encouragements, are generally manifested in the darkest night of trial. Who could be more destitute than Jacob, when he lay down in the desert with a stone for his pillow? See also Acts xxvii. 20—21. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.

THE pride of Israel testified to his face; and they do not return to the Lord their God. This is the worst symptom in a sinner—when he is too proud to go to God. Whatever be our condition, if there is contrition of spirit under it, there is hope of that man. There is no room for despair, to whatever length a man may have gone in sin, if he can smite on his breast, and say, "O Lord! though my sins testify against me, yet thou art a God of compassion. Do thou it, for thy name's sake."

A CHRISTIAN should never attempt to try his state while under a temptation: he might as well attempt to examine the face of the moon while she is under an eclipse. But, when he finds corrupt nature setting in with a temptation—and who has not felt this:—let him remember his Great Physician. This is the glory of the Son of God, that no case, either of the body or of the soul, was ever found too hard for him! Blessed be God, that we have in him a hiding place—a covert from the storm—a refuge from all our enemies!

THE great care of the man who is content with the form of godliness without the power, is, that every thing should be right without; while the true Christian is most careful that every thing

should be right within. It would be nothing to him to be applauded by the whole world, if he had not the approbation of God and his own conscience. Real religion is, therefore, a living principle. Any one may make a show, and be called a Christian, and unite himself to a sect, and be admired,—but, for a man to enter into the sanctuary; to hold secret communion with God; to retire into his closet, and transact all his affairs with an unseen Saviour; to walk with God like Enoch, and yet to smite on his breast with the Publican, having no confidence in the flesh, and triumphing only in Christ Jesus—these are the life and acts of a new creature.

O LORD! let me have ANY THING but thy frown:
and ANY THING, with thy smile!*

WHATEVER, below God, is the object of our love, will at some time or other, be the matter of our sorrow.

TAKE care, Christian! whatever you meet with in your way, that you forget not your FATHER! When the proud and wealthy rush by in triumph, while you are poor and in sorrow, hear the voice of your Father saying, "My son! had I loved them, I should have corrected THEM too. I give them up to the ways of their own hearts: but to my children, if I give sorrow, it is that I may lead them to a crown of glory that fadeth not away!"

It is by faith that we contemplate unseen things. To the eye of a clown, a planet appears but a twinkling star: but if he looked through a telescope, and were able to calculate, he would perceive that it was a great world, and would be astonished at its distance and magnitude. While the gay and the busy are moving on their little mole-hills full of anxiety, faith thus reaches beyond the world: it views death as at hand: it looks at heaven, and catches a glimpse of its glory: it looks at hell and sees the torments of the condemned: it looks at judgment and realizes that awful day: it looks at eternity, and says, *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

WHERE there is a real character, a man will not sit down in the Christian conflict, and say, "If I must carry about with me this body of death, I must submit. I must bear these enemies as quietly as I can." No! he will say, as St. Paul seems to say, "I will be on no terms with sin! I will raise an outcry against the corrupt nature! I will triumph in my Physician! His grace is sufficient

for me: I will wait for a cure, and wait for it in the appointed way. I see light and hope, and liberty; and I thank God, that, if I am a sinner, yet I am a saved sinner!"

God hath set the day of prosperity and the day of adversity, the one over against the other—as the clouds are gathered, for rain, by the shining of the sun: and, if for a moment they are blown aside, we must expect their return.—Where, in our sky, should we look for clouds?—where it is brightest: where our expectations are highest. Our sharpest sorrows arise out of our sweetest comforts. Rachel said, *Give me children, or else I die*: and in obtaining what she esteemed her highest comfort—what she would have at any rate—was hidden the cause of her sharpest grief. God gave her children; and, in bearing her second child, it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died) that she called his name *Ben-oni*—the son of my sorrow.

Who is the most miserable man on earth?—and whither shall we go to seek him? Not to the tavern! not to the theatre! not even to a brothel!—but to the church! That man who has sat Sabbath after Sabbath under the awakening and affecting calls of the gospel, and has hardened his heart against these calls—HE is the man whose condition is the most desperate of all others.—*Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida!—and thou, Capernaum, which are exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.*

GIVE every kind of knowledge its due attention and respect: but what science is to be compared to the knowledge of Christ crucified? Had a traveller lost his way in some desert, where he had wandered till he was fainting with hunger and thirst, for what would he first ask?—for music?—paintings?—No!—he would ask for bread—for water! Any thing else offered him would be a mocking of his misery.

WHAT an oppressive burden is taken off a Christian's shoulders, by his privilege of leaving all consequences, while in the path of duty to God! He has done with—"how shall I bear this trouble?"—"How shall I remove this difficulty?"—"How shall I get through this deep water?"—but leaves himself in the hands of God.

WE may form some idea of the joys of heaven, by the innocent pleasures which God grants us on earth. Here is a fine situation, with wonderful prospects—every thing to delight the senses: yet all this we find in a world which is under a curse! what then may we not expect in a heavenly world, where God exercises all his power for our blessedness?

HOWEVER ill men may treat us, we should never give them a handle to say that we misbehaved our-

* "Give what thou canst, without Thee we are poor!
And with Thee rich, take what thou wilt away."
Corper, Task. V. J. P.

selves. Were I to meet my most bitter adversary, and know that he was come with the most malicious intentions, I should endeavor to be so on my guard, that he could not lay his finger, with truth, on any part of my conduct.

THE motive determines the quality of actions. One man may do a penurious act, because he knows he shall be put to difficulties if he does not: another may do the same from mere avarice.—The king of Edom offered up his son on the wall, and his abominable cruelty excited just indignation: but Abraham, having in intention offered up his son, is held forth to all generations for this act as the father of the faithful.

IT is always a sign of poverty of mind, where men are ever aiming to appear great: for they, who are really great, never seem to know it.

WHAT the world calls the best company is such as a pious mechanic would not condescend to keep: he would rather say, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.*

ONE way of reading the Bible with advantage is, to pay it great homage: so that, when we come to any part which we cannot connect with other passages, we must conclude that this arises from our ignorance, but that the seeming contrarieties are in themselves quite reconcilable.

YOUNG Christians on setting out in life, often mistake greatly in not sufficiently attributing events to the immediate providence of God. They are not reluctant, at the end, to acknowledge that their way has been directed: but they do not enough mark it as they go on. There is a habit of saying, "Such a thing may TURN UP," as if it depended on chance; whereas nothing will turn up, but what was ordered long before. One cause of this evil is, that the divinity of our day deals too much in common-place: certain fundamental truths are set forth: and if a man professes these truths, too little account is made of the faith, dependence, and other graces of a Christian. When a man becomes a Christian he is written upon, as it were, "TO BE PROVIDED FOR!"—and he ought, therefore, to notice, as he goes on, how Providence does provide for him.

MEN mistake in nothing so much, as when they resist their dispensation; for, while God shutteth up a man, there can be no opening. Resistance does but make the dispensation harder to be borne. Job says, *He teareth himself in his anger: but shall the rock be removed because of thee!* The man is, as it were, in a labyrinth: and the hand, which brought him in, must be the hand to conduct him out.

WE require the same hand to protect us in apparent safety, as in the most imminent and palpa-

ble danger. One of the most wicked men in my neighborhood was riding near a precipice, and fell over: his horse was killed, but he escaped without injury: instead of thanking God for his deliverance, he refused to acknowledge the hand of God therein: but attributed his escape to chance. The same man was afterward riding on a very smooth road: his horse suddenly tripped and fell, and threw his rider over his head, and killed him on the spot, while the horse escaped unhurt.

If a man is dead in sin, our attempting to correct his false notions is like laying a dead man straight, who before was lying crooked. The man is dead, and will remain so; though, before, he was lying crooked, and is now lying straight. It matters little what right notions we may have, while we are dead in sin; for we shall never act up to them, till God awakens our hearts.

To have too much forethought, is the part of a WRETCH; to have too little, is the part of a FOOL.

SELF-WILL is so ardent and active, that it will break a world to pieces, to make a stool to sit on.

WE are too little acquainted with the sacred character of God. *A certain man sold a possession, and brought a certain part of the price.* We should have thought this a generous act: but God saw that there wanted a right estimation of his character. Many sins are suffered to pass, to be punished hereafter: but God sometimes breaks out, and strikes an offender dead in vindication of his own glory.

REMEMBER always to mix good sense with good things, or they will become disgusting.

THINGS are not to be done by the effort of the moment, but by the preparation of past moments.

If there is any person to whom you feel dislike, that is the person of whom you ought never to speak.

IRRITABILITY urges us to take a step as much too soon, as sloth does too late.

WHEN we read the Bible we must always remember, that like the holy waters seen by Ezekiel,* it is in some places, up to the ankles; in others, up to the knees; in others, up to the loins; and in some a river too deep to be fathomed, and that *cannot be passed over.* There is light enough to guide the humble and teachable to heaven, and obscurity enough to confound the unbeliever.

* Ezek. ch. xlvii.

TRUE religion as revealed in the Scriptures may be compared to a plum on the tree, covered with its bloom. Men gather the plum, and handle it, and turn and twist it about, till it is deprived of all its native bloom and beauty: the fairest hand would as much rob the plum of its bloom, as any other. Now all that little party-spirit, which so much prevails among men, and which leads them to say, *I am of Paul and I of Apollos*—is but handling the plum till it loses its bloom.

THERE are but two classes of the wise:—the men who serve God because they have found him: and the men who seek him, because they have found him not. All others may say, *Is there not a lie in my right hand?*

PHILOSOPHY is a proud, sullen detector of the poverty and misery of man. It may turn him from the world with a proud, sturdy contempt: but it cannot come forward, and say, "Here are rest—grace—peace—strength—consolation!"

WE hear much of a DECENT pride—a BECOMING pride—a NOBLE pride—a LAUDABLE pride! Can that be DECENT, of which we ought to be ashamed?—Can that be BECOMING, of which God has set forth the deformity?—Can that be NOBLE, which God resists, and is determined to debase?—Can that be LAUDABLE, which God calls abominable.

MANY things are spoken of, in the Scriptures, as good: but there is not one thing emphatically called good, which does not relate to Christ or his coming.

SAY the strongest things you can, with candor and kindness, to a man's face; and make the best excuse you can for him, with truth and justice, behind his back.

MANY people labor to make the narrow way wider. They may dig a path into the broad way; but the way to life must remain a narrow way to the end.

ALL extremes are error. The reverse of error is not truth, but error. Truth lies between these extremes.

I HAVE no doubt, but that there are persons of every description, under every possible circumstance, in every lawful calling among Christians, who will go to heaven—that all the world may see, that neither their circumstances nor calling prevented their being among the number of the blessed.

GOD has given us four books:—the Book of Grace; the Book of Nature; the Book of the

World; and the Book of Providence. Every occurrence is a leaf in one of these books: it does not become us to be negligent in the use of any of them.

ELOQUENCE is vehement simplicity.

GOD is omniscient as well as omnipotent; and omniscience may see reason to withhold what omnipotence could bestow.

ATTEND to the presence of God: this will dignify a small congregation, and annihilate a large one.

HAVING some business to transact with a gentleman in the city, I called one day at his counting house: he begged I would call again, as I had so much more time to spare than he had, who was a man of business. "An hour is nothing to you," said he—"An hour nothing to a clergyman!" said I: "you seem little to understand the nature of our profession. One hour of a clergyman's time rightly employed, Sir, is worth more to him than all the gains of your merchandise."

If a man has a quarrelsome temper, let him alone. The world will soon find him employment. He will soon meet with some one stronger than himself, who will repay him better than you can. A man may fight duels all his life, if he is disposed to quarrel.

ONE day I got off my horse to kill a rat, which I found on the road only half killed. I am shocked at the thoughtless cruelty of many people, yet I did a thing soon after, that has given me considerable uneasiness, and for which I reproach myself bitterly. As I was riding homeward, I saw a wagon standing at a door with three horses; the two foremost were eating their corn from bags at their noses; but I observed the third had dropt his on the ground, and could not stoop to get any food. However, I rode on, in absence, without assisting him. But when I had got nearly home, I remembered what I had observed in my absence of mind, and felt extremely hurt at my neglect: and would have ridden back had I not thought the wagoner might have come out of the house and relieved the horse. A man could not have had a better demand for getting off his horse, than for such an act of humanity. It is by absence of mind, that we omit many duties.

A WICKED man is a candidate for nothing but hell!—However he may live, if his conscience were awake, he would turn pale at this question: *What shall I do in the end thereof?*

THERE is a great defect in Gray's Elegy. You cannot read it without feeling a melancholy: there

is no sunshine—no hope after death: it shows the dark side only of mortality. But a man refined as he was, and speculating on the bankruptcy of human nature, if he brought not evangelical views into the estimate, could describe human nature only as HOPELESS and FORLORN: whereas what HE felt a subject of melancholy is with me included in the calculation. I know it MUST be so, and, according to my views, should be disappointed if it were not so—*My kingdom, said our Lord, is not of this world.*

REVELATION never staggers me. There may be a *tertium quid*, though we are not yet in possession of it, which would put an end to all our present doubts and questions. I was one day riding with a friend: we were discussing a subject, and I expressed myself surprised that such a measure was not adapted. "If I were to tell you one thing," said he, "it would make all clear." I gave him credit that there did exist something, which would entirely dispel my objections. Now if this be the case, in many instances, between man and man, is it an unreasonable conclusion, that all the unaccountable points, which we may observe in the providence and government of God, should be all perfection in the Divine mind? Take the growth of a seed—I cannot possibly say what first produces progress of growth in the grain. Take voluntary motion—I cannot possibly say where action begins and thought ends. The proportion between a fly's mind and a man's is no adequate illustration of the state of man with respect to God; because there is some proportion between the minds or faculties of two finite creatures, but there can be none between finite man and the infinite God.

ONE little preacher will endeavor to prove, with a great deal of warmth, the truth of Calvinistic principles:—and another little preacher will clearly demonstrate the truth of the Arminian scheme. Good sense will go between them, and say, "There are certain things *written* on these subjects—*Thus saith the Lord*:" good sense will hesitate to push what is said to all its apparent conclusions, for—*It is written again.* Here ends all dogmatism with a wise man.

A MOUSE that had lived all his life in a chest, says the fable, chanced one day to creep up to the edge, and, peeping out, exclaimed with wonder—"I did not think the world was so large."

The first step to knowledge, is to know that we are ignorant: It is a great point to know our place: for want of this, a man in private life, instead of attending to the affairs in his "chest," is ever peeping out, and then he becomes a PHILOSOPHER! he must then know every thing, and presumptuously pry into the deep and secret councils of God—not considering that man is finite, and has no faculties to comprehend and judge of the great scheme of things. We can form no other idea of the dispensations of God, nor can have any knowledge of spiritual things, except what God has taught us in his word; and, where he stops, we must

stop. He has not told us why he permitted the angels to fall—why he created Adam—why he suffered sin to enter into the world—why Christ came in the latter ages—when he will come to judgment—what will be the doom of the heathen nations—nor why our state throughout eternity was made to depend on such a moment as man's life: all these are secrets of his council. *Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth?* God urges it on us again and again, that sin HAS entered—and that we must *flee from the wrath to come.* Christ, in the days of his flesh, never gratified curiosity: he answered every inquiry according to the SPIRIT of the inquirer, not according to the letter of the inquiry: if any man came in humility for instruction, he always instructed; but, when any came to gratify a vain curiosity, he answered, as when one said, *Lord, are there few that be saved?*—STRIVE TO ENTER IN AT THE STRAIT GATE!—or, as when another inquired, *Lord, and what shall this man do!*—*What is that to thee?* FOLLOW THOU ME.

WE are too ready to say in trouble, *All these things are against me!* but a Christian should say, "This or that may seem against me; but there is mercy for me: there is a Saviour: there is God's word: and there are his ordinances." He should be more careful to enumerate what is FOR him, than what is AGAINST him. He should look over the list of his spiritual and temporal mercies, as well as that of his sorrows; and remember, that what things are AGAINST him are so on account of his sin. Our pilgrimage is but short:—let us make use of our helps and means. God has given us a guide, and a support to lean on: when the clouds gather, we have only to look to Jesus. We are not to expect the joys of heaven while on earth:—let us be content that there is a highway for us to walk in, and a leader to conduct us in that way.

It is a Christian's business, as much as possible, consistently with his duty, to lessen his cares and occupations in the world. It is very common to hear Christians complain what a hinderance business is, while they are, perhaps, at the very time, too anxious to increase it! There is some fallacy, too, in the complaint: for, where there is a principle of grace, it will prevail even in a multitude of engagements. There is much difference between SEEKING busy situations, and BEING FOUND in them.

WHAT we call "taking steps in life," are most serious occurrences;—especially if there be, in the motive, any mixture of ambition. *Wherefore gaddest thou about to change thy way?*

THE dispensation of grace to some, is little more than a continual combat with corruptions: so that, instead of advancing, a man seems to be but just able to preserve himself from sinking. A boat, with the tide full against it, does well if it can keep from driving back, and must have strong

force indeed to get forward. We must estimate grace by the opposition which it meets with.

How blessed is the Christian, in the midst of his greatest troubles ! It is true we cannot say he is perfect in holiness—that he has never any doubts—that his peace of mind is never interrupted—that he never mistakes providence : but, after all, his is a blessed condition ; for he is supported under his trials, and instructed by the discipline : and, as to his fears, the evil under the apprehension of which he is ready to sink, frequently does not come—or it does not continue—or it is turned into a blessing.

ONE of the greatest impositions of Satan on the mind, is that of quieting a man in the pursuit or possession of what is lawful. So that if it is not murder, or adultery, or theft, which he is committing, all is well ! Because a man's bed is his own, he may idle away in it his inestimable time ! Because his business is lawful, a man may intoxicate his mind with the pursuit of it !

THE very heart and root of sin, is an independent spirit. We erect the idol SELF ; and not only wish others to worship, but worship it ourselves.

WE must take care when we draw parallel cases, not to take such as are not or cannot be made parallel. For instance—we may ask, before we act, “What would Jesus Christ do in this case ? or what would St. Paul ?” but we cannot be guided by this rule in every thing, because Christ's mission was peculiar : it was an unparalleled event : it was for three years only : and, like a great fire, he was always burning—always intent on one point. St. Paul also was in peculiar circumstances : he was sent on an especial errand. In every thing which is in any degree sinful, we should turn to these examples ; But, in the conduct peculiar to our station, our application of these examples must be governed by circumstances.

MANY inexperienced Christians are apt to look for wrong kinds of evidences, and so distress themselves about their state. The questions which we should put to ourselves, in seeking the best evidences, are—“Do I hate sin !—Is it my grand fear !—Is it my grief, that, while I have a good hope of pardon, I yet should make such ill returns ! Have I brokenness of spirit ?”—Godliness is analogous to the principle of gravitation, in that it reduces every thing to its proper centre.

THE difference between what is called FATE, and PREDESTINATION, is something like that of a house *without* a governor, and a house, *with* a governor. The Fatalist says, “Every thing must, of necessity, be as it is—as a stone *must* fall to the ground, fire *must* ascend, &c. The Predestina-

rian says, that every thing is determined by a wise Governor, who inspects, orders, and superintends the whole machine ; so that a sparrow does not fall to the ground, or a hair of the head perish, without permission.

WE are so accustomed to see sin within and without us, that we seldom deeply feel it, or are so shocked at it, as we should be were it less frequent. If an inhabitant of the court were to walk through some of the filthy streets and alleys of the metropolis, how would he be disgusted and terrified ! while the poor wretches, who live in them, think nothing of the matter. Thus a clearer view of sin and of the holiness of God, made the prophet cry out, *Wo is me ! for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.*

It is much easier to SETTLE a point, than to ACT on it.

I ONCE said to myself, in the foolishness of my heart, “What sort of sermon must that have been which was preached by St. Peter, when three thousand souls were converted AT ONCE ?”—What sort of sermon !—such as other sermons. There is nothing to be found in it extraordinary. The effect was not produced by St. Peter's eloquence : but by the mighty power of God, present with his word. It is in vain to attend one minister after another, and to hear sermon after sermon, unless we pray that the Holy Spirit accompany his word. *Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth ; but God that giveth the increase.*

THAT humility which courts notice, is not FIRST-RATE. It may be sincere, but it is sullied. Do not sound a trumpet, nor say, “Come and see how humble I am.”

WE should be careful never to discourage any one who is searching after God. If a man begins in earnest *to feel after him if haply he may find him*, let us be aware how we stop him, by rashly telling him he is not seeking in the right way. This would be like setting fire to the first round of the ladder, by which one was attempting to escape. We must wait for a fit season to communicate light. Had any one told me, when I first began to think religiously, that I was not seeking God in the right way, I might have been discouraged from seeking him at all. I was much indebted to my mother, for her truly wise and judicious conduct toward me when I first turned from my vanity and sin

WE should always record our thoughts in affliction—set up way-marks—set up our Bethels—erect our Ebenezers ; that we may recur to them in health ; for then we are in other circumstances, and can never recover our sick-bed views.

A CONTEMPLATIVE life has more the APPEARANCE of a life of piety than any other : but it is the divine plan to bring faith into ACTIVITY and EXERCISE. We chose that sort of walk, which we like best : if we love quiet, we are for sedentary piety ; but the design of God is to root us out of every thing, and bring us into more useful stations.

A WRETCHED prisoner, chained to the floor for a length of time, would deem it a high privilege to be allowed to walk across the room. Another, confined to lie on his back till it had become sore, would think it a great favor if he might be permitted to turn on his side for a few minutes. In a course of habitual pain, I am thankful for five minutes' freedom from suffering ; how forgetful have I been of fifty years of tolerable ease ! How unmindful are we of what we call common mercies !

IN order to read the Bible with profit, we must begin by denying ourselves every step of the way : for, every step of the way, it will be found to oppose our corrupt nature.

CHRISTIANS resemble travellers in a stage-coach. We are full of our plans and schemes, but the coach is moving rapidly forward : it passes one mile-stone, and then another ; and no regard is paid to the plots and plans of the passengers.

A CHRISTIAN has advanced but a little way in religion when he has overcome the love of the world : for he has still more powerful and importunate enemies : self—evil tempers—pride—undue affections—a stubborn will—it is by the subduing of these adversaries, that we must chiefly judge of our growth in grace.

A FRIEND called on me when I was ill, to settle some business. My head was too much confused by my indisposition to understand fully what he said ; but I had such unlimited confidence in him, that I did whatever he bid me, in the fullest assurance that it was right. How simply I can trust in man, and how little in God ! How unreasonable is a pure act of faith in one like ourselves, if we cannot repose the same faith in God.

Some negative rules, given to a Young Minister going into a situation of peculiar difficulty.

As I know you have received much good advice, I would suggest to you a few hints of a negative kind : with a view of admonishing you to be careful, while you are doing your work, not by any mistakes of your own to hinder your success—

I. *By forgetting that your success with others is very much connected with your personal character.*

Herod heard John gladly, and he did many things ; because he knew the preacher to be a just and holy man. Words uttered from the

heart find their way to the heart, by a holy sympathy. Character is power :—

“ A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives.”

If you would make deep impressions on others, you must use all means to have them first formed on your own mind. Avoid, at the same time, *all appearances of evil*—as a covetous or worldly, a vain or assuming, careless or indevout deportment. Never suffer jesting with sacred persons or things. Satan will employ such antidotes as these, to counteract the operation of that which is effective and gracious in a minister's character.

II. *By placing your dependence on any means, qualities, or circumstances, however excellent in themselves.*

The direct way to render a thing weak, is to lean on it as strong. *God is a jealous God ; and will utterly abolish idols* as a means of success. He designs to demonstrate that men and creatures are what he makes them, and that only. This also should be your encouragement :—looking, in the diligent and humble use of means, to that Spirit of life and power without whose influence all your endeavors will be to no purpose, you have reason to expect help suited and adequate to all your difficulties.

III. *By unnecessarily appearing in dangerous or improper situations.*

It is one thing to be humble and condescending ; it is another to render yourself common, cheap and contemptible. The men of the world know when a minister is out of his place—when they can oppress him by numbers or circumstances—when they can make him laugh, while his office frowns. Well will it be for him, if he is only rendered ABSURD in his future public admonitions, by his former compliances ; well if, being found like St. Peter on dangerous ground, he is not seduced, virtually at least, to deny his Master.

IV. *By suspicious appearances in his family.*

As the head of your household you are responsible for its appearances. Its pride, sloth, and disorder will be yours. You are accountable for your wife's conduct, dress, and manners, as well as those of your children, whose education must be peculiarly exemplary. Your family is to be a picture of what you wish other families to be : and, without the most determined resolution, in reliance on God, to finish this picture COST WHAT IT WILL, your recommending family religion to others will but create a smile. Your unfriendly hearers will recollect enough of Scripture to tell you that you ought, like the primitive bishop, to be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity : for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God ?

V. *By meddling beyond your sphere in temporals.*

Your aim and conversation, like your sacred call, are to be altogether heavenly. As a man of God, you have no concern with politics and parties and schemes of interest, but you are to live above them. There is a sublime spirit in a devoted minister, which, as one says of Christianity itself, pays no more regard to these things, than to the battles of rooks, the industry of ants, or the policy of bees.

VI. *By venturing off general and acknowledged ground in spirituals.*

By giving strong meat instead of milk, to those who are yet but babes—by giving heed to fables, which minister questions rather than godly edifying; amusing the mind, but not affecting the heart: often disturbing and bewildering, seldom convincing; frequently raising a smile, never drawing a tear.

VII. *By maintaining acknowledged truth in your own spirit.*

Both food and medicines are injurious, if administered scalding hot. The spirit of a teacher often effects more than his matter. Benevolence is a universal language: and it will apologize for a multitude of defects, in the man who speaks it; while neither talents nor truth will apologize for pride, illiberality, or bitterness. Avoid, therefore irritating occasions and persons, particularly disputing and disputants, by which a minister often loses his temper and his character.

VIII. *By being too sharp-sighted, too quick-eyed, or too ready-tongued.*

Some evils are irremediable: they are best neither seen nor heard: by SEEING and HEARING things which you cannot remove, you will create implacable adversaries; who, being guilty aggressors, never forgive. Avoid SPEAKING meanly or harshly of any one: not only because this is forbidden to Christians, but because it is to declare war as by a thousand heralds.

IX. *By the temptations arising from the female sex.*

I need not mention what havoc Satan has made in the church, by this means, from the fall to this day. Your safety when in danger from this quarter, lies in flight—to parley is to fall. Take the first hint from conscience, or from friends.

In fine, *Watch thou in all things; endure afflictions: do the work of an evangelist: make full proof of thy ministry:* and then, whether those around you acknowledge your real character or not now, they shall one day know that there hath been a prophet among them!

FRAGMENT.

A Dying Minister's Farewell.

WHEN a Christian minister feels the springs of life giving way:—his faculties decaying—his voice failing—his spirit sinking—though he may not have it in his power to say, as the apostle did to his friends, *I know that ye all, among whom I have preached the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more*—yet he should stand ready to part with his flock, and every sermon should be felt by him as if it were his last.

Wherefore *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men: for I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL THE COUNSEL of God.* And what have I declared that counsel of God to be?—All the curious distinctions of the schools?—All the peculiarities insisted on so strongly by different sects?—No such thing! I have followed the great apostle in *testifying RE-*

PENTANCE toward God and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

There has been a slander brought against religion—that we are NOT AGREED, as to the truths we set before men. I say, it is false! We are agreed. All, who know any thing of real religion, are agreed, that the SUBSTANCE of the matter is contained in REPENTANCE toward God, and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

If a man, like the prodigal, feels that he has left his father's house—turned his back on God—and is become a fool and a madman for so doing—and that there is no hope but in his returning again: if such a change of mind is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, as he wrought in David, when he cried, *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin:* if, like Peter, he goes forth weeping bitterly—feeling that he has acted foolishly and wickedly, and that his only hope is in the mercy of God through the Saviour—then the man enters so far into the spirit of religion—REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD.

But does he rest in this? Nay, he knows that if he could offer *thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil*, he could make no satisfaction for the sin of his soul. He looks to the atonement!—to Him, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

Repentance toward God must be accompanied by faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These men are enabled to say with St. Paul, *"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. I have no refuge but in him—no other hope—no other plea. All my confidence before God is grounded on this—that He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."*

If a minister testifies these things—if he speaks plainly and simply these grand essential truths of God's word—though he die before another Sabbath return, HE MAY REST IN PEACE—leaving the issue in God's hand.

The ground of a minister's own solid satisfaction cannot be POPULARITY: for even to Simon Magus all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, *This man is the great power of God!*—neither can he ground his satisfaction on the exercise of strong and enlarged TALENTS: for even Balaam was a man of extraordinary endowments—nor can it be on his SUCCESS:—for many, saith our Lord, shall come to me, and say, *Have we not done many wonderful works in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you!* As though he had said, *"I deny not the works, but ye are evil men!"*

But a minister's satisfaction must be grounded on the faithful discharge of his office in THE DELIVERY OF HIS MESSAGE. A Prince sends a special messenger to his rebellious subjects, with offers of pardon: in examining his conduct, he will not inquire whether they received and approved him or not: the question will be—*"Did you deliver my message? did you deliver it as one that believed it yourself? as one IN EARNEST?"* If a

man should come and tell you, with a cheerful countenance and careless air, that your house was on fire, and that you and your children would be burnt in the flames if you did not make haste to escape, you would not believe him. You would say, "He does not believe it himself, or he would not be so unfeeling as to speak of it in such a manner."

If a minister delivers his message, then no scorn, no reproach that may be cast upon him, can take away his rest—he has done his duty. When the king sent out his servants to invite men to his feast, they excused themselves on various pretences: but the servant might say, "No matter!—I have declared the message—I may rest in having done my part, though no success seems to attend my pressing invitations."

I would lodge, therefore, my appeal in your consciences—I take you to record—I appeal to conscience: for there is a conscience in man; and, in serious moments, it will speak out. It wrung from Joseph's brethren that confession, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother!* It forced Balaam himself to cry out, *Let me die the death of the righteous!* and let my last end be like his! It tormented the traitor Judas into that self-accusation, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood!*

When a young person has been talked to by his parents—when they have represented to him the misery and ruin of a wicked course, and of bad habits—he might affect to brave it out at the time; but he has gone afterward weeping through the streets—because CONSCIENCE WOULD SPEAK.

But when the Spirit of God softens a man's heart—when he is made to *FEEL what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God*—then a faithful minister's appeal to that man is like that of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe. As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you (as a father doth his children) that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, (as it is in truth) the word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* 1 Thess. ii. 10—13.

It is most affecting to see to what miserable shifts men will have recourse, in order to evade the truth.

"It is IRRATIONAL," says one, "to insist so much on certain peculiarities of doctrine!"—But whose reason shall be the judge?—*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but it is written I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.*

"It is UNNECESSARY," says another—But has God commanded—and do we pronounce his commands unnecessary?

"It is DISREPUTABLE"—Did Christ regard reputation?—*Nay, he made himself of no reputation.*

"It is a NARROW way"—Ah! there, indeed,

you pronounce truly! The way of heaven is a narrow way! But what says the judge—*Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Oh how distressing is it to observe many, to whom we cannot but fear, the gospel which they hear preached from Sunday to Sunday, is but the *savor of death!* If God has made a difference in any of us, let us not forget to whom we are indebted.

Brethren! you are my witnesses. I take you to record, that you have had the whole counsel of God declared unto you—that all curious and metaphysical inquiries, all critical and conjectural points have been carefully avoided for your sake. I have attempted to clear my ministry of all disputable subjects, in order to set before you the plain fact of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of salvation through him.

But consider! you also must give an account! I must give an account, whether I plainly and simply declared the truth, as one who felt its importance, and was in earnest. You must give an account, whether you have gone away from this place, as if you had heard nothing to the purpose, and immediately dissipated your thoughts with some trifling subject—some mere secular concern:—or—whether what you heard brought you to your knees before God, beseeching him to seal and impress his truth upon your hearts.

Oh consider the satisfaction you will find, in really embracing *all the counsel of God*. Consider how soon the time will come, in which it must be your only SATISFACTION, that you have embraced it! Let it be your prayer, as you go hence—"O God, give me grace to repent with that repentance which is unto life! Make me serious! Teach me what I must do to be saved! Help me to believe the record which thou hast given of thy Son. Give me faith to receive the atonement—to set to my seal that *there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*, but the name of Jesus Christ."

Come to your Saviour, with HUMILITY as a sinner: come with GRATITUDE and LOVE. "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words:" when, "so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But ye are come unto mount Sion; and unto the city of the living God—the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; and to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all: and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See, then, that ye refuse not him that speaketh!—but—receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us hold fast grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." Heb. xii. 18—28.



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